



12-2005

College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes

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Recommended Citation

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by John Patrick Teeples entitled "College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes." I have examined the final electronic copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Educational Administration.

Gary Ubben, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend its acceptance:

James A. Crook, Norma T. Mertz, Malcolm McInnis

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

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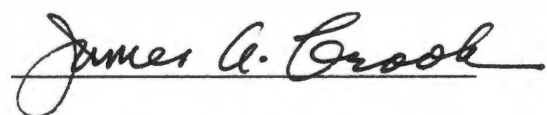
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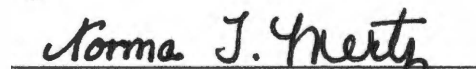


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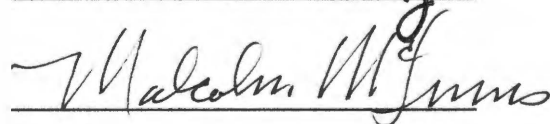
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Vice Chancellor and Dean of
Graduate Studies

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2005b
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College Choice Decisions
of Student Athletes

A Dissertation Presented for the
Doctor of Education Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

John Patrick Teeples
December 2005

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to those individuals who were instrumental in supporting me and this project:

Dr. Jeff Aper started me on this path. Although this study has changed somewhat since he was a part of it, he provided the early guidance that I needed to begin this task.

Dr. Norma Mertz has been a part of my committee and my coursework since the beginning. Her guidance and tactful honesty have always been appreciated.

Dr. Malcolm McInnis and Dr. James Crook participated in the defense of my research even though they had retired from the university. I appreciate the fact that they were willing to see it through.

Mike Newman of the university's Statistical Consulting Center was instrumental in helping me with the design and calculation of my statistical data. Thank you so much.

The athletic directors, coaches, athletic support staff, and student athletes of the University of Tennessee were great to work with. Without their help and access, this study would not have been possible.

Dr. Gary Ubben took over as chair of my committee. He gave an inordinate amount of his time, both on campus and off, to help me work out the various issues associated with this study. He provided the right amount of challenge, support, and prodding that I needed to complete this project.

Finally, I'd like to thank my extremely supportive parents, Robert and Betty Teeples. They recognized the importance of education and instilled in me at an early age the desire to achieve whatever I could. They understood that this process was demanding but worth the wait. This dissertation is dedicated to them.

ABSTRACT

This study is a population study of college choice criteria among student athletes at the University of Tennessee. This study surveyed 408 student athletes from an NCAA division 1A institution during their team meetings, spring semester of 2004. These participants competed in 16 sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, football, men's and women's golf, men's and women's track and field (both indoor, outdoor, and cross-country), women's soccer, women's softball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, women's volleyball and women's rowing.

The 408 student athletes were categorized by gender, race, socio-economic status, scholarship level, and sport played. There were 234 male participants and 174 female participants. One hundred fifty-six participants reported being on full athletic scholarship. 147 participants reported being on partial athletic scholarship, while 105 were non-scholarship. Socioeconomic status was ascertained from information the student athletes gave about the educational attainment of both parents. Forty-six participants stated that both parents (or one parent in a single parent household) had a high school or less education, 82 stated that only one parent had college experience (whether single parent home or not), while 280 stated that both parents had college experience. Two hundred seventy-five of the participants were Caucasian, while 133 were non-Caucasian.

A 27-item questionnaire was used to measure reported differences on the choice of attending the University of Tennessee on the basis of college choice criteria. Overall, the student athletes cited having an opportunity to win championships as the major reason they chose the University of Tennessee. Other criteria identified were (2) the school's athletic conference reputation, (3) athletic facilities, (4) the school's sports programs

reputation, and (5) comfort with other players. The lowest ranked college choice criteria for the student athletes included their high school coach's recommendation, college guides and publications, their friend's recommendation, school alumni, and their high school guidance counselor's recommendation. Results are presented by category and the implications for athletic recruiting are discussed, along with needed future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION	1
PROBLEM STATEMENT	6
PURPOSE STATEMENT	7
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	7
SIGNIFICANCE.....	8
ASSUMPTIONS.....	9
LIMITATIONS.....	9
DELIMITATIONS	9

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

BACKGROUND	11
STUDIES ON THE COLLEGE CHOICE DECISIONS OF TRADITIONAL STUDENTS.....	12
STUDIES ON THE COLLEGE CHOICE DECISIONS OF STUDENT ATHLETES	29
SUMMARY	33

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN	34
SITE AND POPULATION	34
INSTRUMENTATION	35
PROCEDURES.....	36
DATA ANALYSIS.....	38

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

DESCRIPTION OF POPULATION	41
RESEARCH QUESTION #1	47
RESEARCH QUESTION #2.....	49
GENDER	49
RACE.....	54
SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS	58
SCHOLARSHIP LEVEL.....	65
SPORT	71
RESEARCH QUESTION #3.....	78

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DISCUSSION	82
RESEARCH QUESTION #1.....	83
STUDENT ATHLETE FINDINGS.....	84
RESEARCH QUESTION #2.....	84
FINDINGS FOR GENDER.....	84
FINDINGS FOR RACE	85

FINDINGS FOR SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS.....	86
FINDINGS FOR SCHOLARSHIP LEVEL	87
FINDINGS FOR SPORT.....	87
RESEARCH QUESTION #3.....	89
FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE	89
CONCLUSIONS.....	91
RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FIELD	94
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	95
REFERENCES.....	98
APPENDICES.....	107
APPENDIX A.....	108
APPENDIX B	109
APPENDIX C	112
APPENDIX D.....	114
APPENDIX E	116
VITA.....	145

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 4.1: Gender of Participants.....	42
TABLE 4.2: Race of Participants	43
TABLE 4.3: Race of Participants Combined.....	43
TABLE 4.4: Parental Education Level of Participants	43
TABLE 4.5: Scholarship Level of Participants	44
TABLE 4.6: Men's Sports	45
TABLE 4.7: Women's Sports	46
TABLE 4.8: Top Five Criteria for all Student Athletes.....	48
TABLE 4.9: Bottom Five Criteria for all Student Athletes	49
TABLE 4.10: Top Five Criteria for all Female Student Athletes.....	50
TABLE 4.11: Bottom Five Criteria for all Female Student Athletes	51
TABLE 4.12: Top Five Criteria for all Male Student Athletes	52
TABLE 4.13: Bottom Five Criteria for all Male Student Athletes.....	53
TABLE 4.14: Top Five Criteria for all Caucasian Student Athletes	54
TABLE 4.15: Bottom Five Criteria for all Caucasian Student Athletes	55
TABLE 4.16: Top Five Criteria for all Non-Caucasian Student Athletes	56
TABLE 4.17: Bottom Five Criteria for all Non-Caucasian Student Athletes	57
TABLE 4.18: Top Five Criteria for Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education.....	59
TABLE 4.19: Bottom Five Criteria for Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education.....	60
TABLE 4.20: Top Five Criteria for Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College.....	61
TABLE 4.21: Bottom Five Criteria for Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College.....	62
TABLE 4.22: Top Five Criteria for Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College.....	63
TABLE 4.23: Bottom Five Criteria for Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College	64
TABLE 4.24: Top Five Criteria for all Full Scholarship Student Athletes	65
TABLE 4.25: Bottom Five Criteria for all Full Scholarship Student Athletes	66
TABLE 4.26: Top Five Criteria for all Partial Scholarship Student Athletes	67
TABLE 4.27: Bottom Five Criteria for all Partial Scholarship Student Athletes	68
TABLE 4.28: Top Five Criteria for all Non-Scholarship Student Athletes	69

TABLE 4.29: Bottom Five Criteria for all Non-Scholarship Student Athletes	70
TABLE 4.30: Sports Rank Top Five	73
TABLE 4.31: Sports Rank Bottom Five.....	75
TABLE 4.32 Top Five Criteria by Mean and Rank for Football and Category	77
TABLE 4.33 Bottom Five Criteria by Mean and Rank for Football and Category	78
TABLE A.1: Total Percentage for all Student Athletes	116
TABLE A.2: Total Percentage for all Female Student Athletes.....	117
TABLE A.3: Total Percentage for all Male Student Athletes	118
TABLE A.4: Total Percentage for all Caucasian Student Athletes	119
TABLE A.5: Total Percentage for all Non-Caucasian Student Athletes	120
TABLE A.6: Total Percentage for Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education.....	121
TABLE A.7: Total Percentage for Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College.....	122
TABLE A.8: Total Percentage for Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College.....	123
TABLE A.9: Total Percentage for all Full Scholarship Student Athletes	124
TABLE A.10: Total Percentage for all Partial Scholarship Student Athletes	125
TABLE A.11: Total Percentage for all Non-Scholarship Student Athletes	126
TABLE A.12: Total Percentage for Men's Baseball	127
TABLE A.13: Total Percentage for Men's Basketball	128
TABLE A.14: Total Percentage for Men's Football	129
TABLE A.15: Total Percentage for Men's Golf	130
TABLE A.16: Total Percentage for Men's Swimming and Diving	131
TABLE A.17: Total Percentage for Men's Tennis	132
TABLE A.18: Total Percentage for Men's Track and Field	133
TABLE A.19: Total Percentage for Women's Basketball.....	134
TABLE A.20: Total Percentage for Women's Golf	135
TABLE A.21: Total Percentage for Women's Rowing.....	136
TABLE A.22: Total Percentage for Women's Soccer.....	137
TABLE A.23: Total Percentage for Women's Softball	138
TABLE A.24: Total Percentage for Women's Swimming and Diving	139
TABLE A.25: Total Percentage for Women's Tennis.....	140
TABLE A.26: Total Percentage for Women's Track and Field.....	141
TABLE A.27: Total Percentage for Women's Volleyball.....	142
TABLE A.28: Total Percentage for Sports Rank Top Five by Mean.....	143
TABLE A.29: Total Percentage for Sports Rank Bottom Five by Mean	144

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

College athletics has become big business, a growth industry. It feeds on ever-greater sums of money. There has been a lot of talk lately about skyrocketing expenditures in big-time college athletics. This issue has become an agenda item for almost any athletic oversight group (Gerdy, 1997).

The assumption of college athletic departments is that success comes from spending more money. Whether it's an \$80 million expansion project for the football stadium at the University of Oregon or the University of Tennessee raising the head football coach's salary to over a million dollars a year (including TV and apparel deals), spending for college athletics has seen a growth like never before (Lockridge, 2002).

College athletics has become big business. Institutions that reported profits in their athletics programs made more money and those with deficits had higher losses than two years ago, according to the most recent study of revenues and expenditures for intercollegiate athletics programs (NCAA, 2002). In Division I-A, average total revenue per institution in 2001 was \$21.9 million; up from \$17.8 million in 1997, the last time the study was completed. That is a 23 percent increase. At the same time, average total expenses in Division I-A increased from \$17.3 million to \$20 million, a 15.6 percent increase.

The largest reported total revenue for a Division I-A university was just over \$73 million. The largest reported total expenses were \$63.4 million. Thirty Division I-A institutions reported that expenses exceeded revenues, with an average loss of \$1.9

million. Without including institutional support, 56 institutions reported a loss, with an average loss of \$3.3 million. In 1997, 55 institutions reported that expenses exceeded revenues, with an average loss of \$2.8 million. The average Division I-A program showed a deficit of \$800,000 in 1997 and an average deficit of \$200,000 in 1995.

Of course, those rapidly escalating profits apply to an increasingly limited group. In 1993, 51 percent of all I-A programs made money, as compared to 35 percent in the 2001. In fact, most I-A programs now are operating at a loss and that average loss is about 14 percent larger than it was two years earlier. What this shows is that athletic departments are willing to spend greater sums of money in hopes of being one of the fewer institutions that are making a profit.

The 2002 NCAA study also illustrated the financial difference between large and small Division I-A programs. In total revenue, the bottom 10 percent ranged from \$4.3 million to \$9.8 million annually. The top 10 percent, however, averaged revenue between \$43.5 million and \$79.6 million annually. It is this incongruity that seems to drive many athletic departments to spend an increasing amount of money to become one of the top 10 percent of institutions in profitability.

The same gap was apparent in expenses, where the bottom 10 percent spent between \$6.2 million and \$10.3 million while the top 10 percent spent between \$38.8 million and \$52.1 million.

While the number of I-A programs showing a profit is declining, the amount of profit for those programs in the black is accelerating rapidly. The average profit increased 38 percent over the previous study; even more notably, it has increased 209 percent since the 1997 report. Conversely, the number of Division I-A programs operating at a deficit

increased from 56 programs in 1999 to 74 programs in 2001. The reality is that there are fewer programs making money, while those that do show a profit are seeing revenues like never before. The assumption is that spending money will improve an institution's stance to prospective recruits, which will in turn lead to athletic success. It is this athletic success that will lead to athletic departments making a profit (Gabert, Hale, and Montalvo, 1999).

Outside of the obvious desire of athletic departments to make more money, the underlying assumption is that spending money will attract the best recruits and that will lead to greater success on the field or the court; which in turn will make more money. Do athletes consider any of this when selecting their school of choice? Do facilities, support systems, or head coaches make any difference in where a student athlete decides to attend? If not, is all this spending justified? Should schools be spending this kind of money when the result is unknown?

The college choice process for high school student athletes has become one of the most chronicled, if not debated, processes associated with intercollegiate athletics (Lockridge, 2002). Over the last several years there has been a growth in companies that follow college recruiting. There are television shows, magazines, and websites dedicated to the decisions high school student athletes make regarding their choice of colleges. Colleges are even ranked on their recruiting classes by these recruiting services. Much has been written (in newspapers, magazines, sports journals, and the internet) on the final college choice decision of the student athlete (where they chose to attend college) but virtually nothing has been written about the criteria the student athletes used when selecting a college.

For the 2000 - 2001 school year, over 250,000 first-time college freshmen competed in sports at the NCAA, NAIA, or National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) level (NCAA Participation Study, 2001). While a significant body of literature exists on the criteria surrounding college choice of students, very little is known about the criteria related to college choice among student athletes except for a small number of studies (Gowler, 1971; Mathes and Gurney, 1985). With the pressure at most levels of sports to win, to recruit the best student athletes, and to retain and graduate student athletes, the recruitment process for these student athletes may be as important as ever (Andre and James, 1991; Sevier, 1993; Weiler, 1996). It would be beneficial for colleges and student athletes to understand the criteria student athletes used when making their college choice decisions in order to create a more agreeable setting for both parties involved.

Colleges, athletic departments, and alumni spend time and money to build a winning athletic tradition and the public image and perception of the university tends to follow along. This public image, it seems, falls on the shoulders of its athletic teams and of its successes and failures. An important part of this process is the successful recruitment of highly skilled student athletes. Because athletic success is often tied to the prestige of an institution, acquiring "blue chip" student athletes through the recruiting process is a major concern of university coaches, fans, and alumni. Media exposure of athletics not only generates revenue for the institution, but also has the potential to make the institution more attractive to potential students. One successful athletic team or season can lift an institution from obscurity to prominence, and in return, increase enrollment and generate needed financial support (Gerdy, 1997).

The traditional considerations of selecting a college (academic reputation, location, size, etc) may not always apply to student athletes. They are recruited for their athletic talent rather than for their academic contributions. This recruitment can be so intense that that the prospective student athlete may lose sight of the educational process. The competition for these high school student athletes can be so overwhelming that the student athlete focuses primarily on the athletic aspects of the institution and overlooks the educational aspects.

In 1987, Hossler and Gallagher proposed a student-centered model of college choice, which was described as a combination of the models developed by Chapman (1981) and Jackson (1982). This model was further expanded by Hossler in Going to College (2000). The model posits a three-phase series of processes separated into predisposition, search, and choice stages. The predisposition stage refers to the plans students develop for when they graduate from high school. Family background, academic achievement, peers, and other experiences influence the decisions about post-secondary choices. The decision to attend college is grounded in the predisposition stage. The search stage refers to the students' discovering and evaluating possible college choices. This stage lays the groundwork for what the student is looking for in a post-secondary institution (i.e. subject major, size, location, climate, etc.). The choice stage refers to how students actually decide on an institution from among those that were considered in the previous stage.

Hossler and Gallagher's model not only focuses on the attributes of students, but also seeks to incorporate some of the institution's characteristics to produce predictable student outcomes within the choice stage. Hossler and Gallagher highlighted various

student attributes, such as race and gender, but did not account for other student groups, such as student athletes. It is in this last stage (choice) that this study is grounded. The choice stage is where students utilize the various college choice criteria to select an institution.

Although the body of literature on college choice by undergraduates is growing, it is limited in the area of specific subject groups such as student athletes. In a time of increased competition for student athletes, due to scholarship reductions and financial pressures associated with athletics, little research has been devoted to the criteria associated with college choice by student athletes.

Problem Statement

The problem of the study is that a significant group of students, such as student athletes, have seldom been identified in college choice research based on the criteria they used in making their college choice decisions. Adding specific groups of students (such as student athletes) to the literature on college choice is important in adding to the body of knowledge on the subject. Further, while gender, race, and socioeconomic status have been addressed in college choice research, the interactions of these criteria with sports participation have not. What were the criteria student athletes named as the reasons they selected their school of choice? Are there similarities or differences in the criteria named based on demographic categories such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in? Are the criteria student athletes identified in making this decision similar to the data on general student populations?

In a time of increased scrutiny on the spending habits of major college athletic departments, there seems to be an assumption that increased spending for bigger name head coaches and improved practice and student life facilities will attract the most sought after recruit, which will in turn lead to a more successful athletic team. Institutions seem to believe that success comes from increased spending. But does spending more money really have an effect on the recruitment of student athletes?

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to determine what criteria student athletes at one major institution reported as being most and least important in their college choice selection. Secondly, the objective was to determine if there were similarities or differences among the criteria between sub-groups of student athletes based on gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, and sport participated in. The final objective was to compare these findings with the data that exists for general student populations.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What criteria do student athletes report as being most and least important in their college choice decision?
2. Do the criteria student athletes report as being most and least important in their college choice decision differ by gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in?

3. Do the criteria reported by the student athletes differ from the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice?

Significance

There is a vast body of work on college choice decisions, but little research has been done on the criteria student athletes used when choosing their college of choice. This study adds information about a significant group of students (i.e., student athletes), to the body of literature on college choice.

It is not directly known what the criteria are that student athletes use in selecting an institution of higher learning to attend. It is possible that the student athlete may base his or her decision on where he or she can blend in with the student body, and participate in normal college activities away from the stress of being a sports figure. It is also possible that the student may view athletics as an opportunity to go to college that would not otherwise be possible due to financial concerns (Figone, 1989).

With the growth of major college athletics and the competition for quality athletes, the selection of a college by student athletes has become a major concern for most athletic programs. Athletic departments around the country are spending vast amounts of money on the assumption that this spending will attract higher caliber athletes, which in turn will lead to success.

While attracting the most sought after recruit does not always equal athletic success, it does help the athletic team compete at a high level. Any pattern, preference, or trend that can be uncovered would prove to be a valuable resource to a university's athletic program in that it would help identify those characteristics that student athletes

deem important in selecting their school of choice. These possible patterns also give insight about how the student athlete is different, or similar to, general student populations. It is hoped that revealing a student athlete's needs and hopes could lead to a better match between the student and the institution.

Assumptions

It was assumed that all participants were candid and honest in their responses. The assumption was that all student athletes went through the recruiting process and had their choice of a number of schools. It was assumed that the final decision to attend the college of choice was made by the student athlete. It was also assumed that the student athlete knew why they chose their institution.

Limitations

In this quantitative study, the survey research method used resulted in statistical data that may, or may not, be reflective of all student athletes. This study cannot be generalized to other student athletes at other NCAA division 1-A institutions. It only reflects the responses of student athletes at the University of Tennessee.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to one major athletic institution. Thus, the findings related to student athletes at that institution and may not be reflective of student athletes who chose other institutions. Furthermore, this study was delimited to the responses of

student athletes during the Spring 2004 academic term. This study confines itself to a survey research method at one large NCAA division 1-A institution.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Background

Student college choice has been defined as “a complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school, followed later by a decision to attend a specific college, university, or institution of advanced vocational training” (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989). This review of the literature on college choice was guided by this definition. Numerous models of college choice behavior were studied and provided a framework for a better understanding of the subject matter, though the models did rely on data specific to predicting how students choose a college [Hossler and Gallagher (1987), Jackson (1982), Kotler and Fox (1985), and Chapman (1984)].

Educational researchers with disciplinary backgrounds in sociology, economics, and psychology have conducted much of the research on college choice. Sociologists often view college choice as a status attainment process while economists tend to view it as an investment decision. Psychologists mostly view the college choice decision as the impact of the college experience with regard to the optimal student-institution fit (Paulsen, 1990). In studies of the status attainment process, most sociologists focus on the early stages of the college choice process. Perhaps sociology’s greatest contribution to college choice research has been in the area of the factors that influence the process by which a student forms educational aspirations or plans to attend college, but this research is weak in the area of actually how a student decides on which school to attend. Economists often view college-going behavior as a manifestation of an investment-like

decision making process (Stordahl, 1970). Economic research does not include the specific college choice decision. Psychologists have found that the characteristics of students making the college choice decision were highly related to the climate of the institution. Psychological researchers suggest that students tend to select institutions with student bodies that reflect themselves. Beyond these findings, psychological research fails to elaborate on other methods students used when selecting an institution. While each background gives a foundation to the college choice phenomenon, none give specific factors in college choice decisions.

The study of student college choice prior to the 1970s was relatively minimal. Between 1940 and 1960, a period of growth in enrollments, colleges had little interest in why a student selected their institution (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989). Institutional admissions' offices during this time emphasized the selection of quality students because of the quantity of students applying. Due to a predicted decrease in the number of students eligible to attend college in the 1970s, research began to be conducted to address the factors that determined the selection of one university over another (Hossler, 1984). As a result of changes in enrollment patterns, competition, and the decline of financial resources, college selection and attendance research have received considerably more scholarly attention since that time.

Studies on the College Choice Decisions of Traditional Students

Holland and Richards (1958) conducted some of the earliest research on college choice. They used cluster sampling in their research of student explanations of college choice. While the work is dated, it is referenced in most literature reviews on college

choice and includes one of the largest sample groups. Eight thousand two hundred ninety two students were chosen at random from ACT data of 1956. The students were asked to rate twenty-seven institutional characteristics (class size, location, facilities, curricular offerings, etc.) in order to organize the choices into categories such as cost, academic, and status. The idea was to develop a framework of college choice for college administrators for enrollment and admission purposes. The items were rated according to a three-point Likert-type scale and grouped based on frequency and correlation. The authors found similarities between men and women in their ranking of the characteristics. Both genders stressed intellectual emphasis, advice of others, social factors, and practicality as reasons for college choice selection. Males were less concerned than females about facilities and security, while females were more concerned with class size and instructor availability.

In a dated, but impressive, research study, Hood and Swanson (1965) surveyed twenty five thousand students from Minnesota in 1950 to determine post-secondary plans. In 1961, approximately forty-five thousand more students were surveyed. That accounted for ninety-seven percent of all high school seniors in Minnesota that year. The independent variables were various sub-groups such as sex, size of school, and residence. Though specific issues of college choice were not addressed, the idea was to find out what type of student was more likely to go to college. It was found that college attendance was higher for high ability students, metropolitan students, males, and students whose parents were highly educated and wealthy. The least likely to attend were females, and those students who came from farming communities. Trends between the two studies were observed and it was noted that in the ten years since the first study,

females going to college stayed the same while males going to college increased dramatically.

Stordahl (1966) conducted a study of the college choice decision by Northern Michigan University freshmen. A questionnaire consisting of eighteen items that were identified as individual and institutional characteristics was given to the four hundred and forty incoming students. A three-point scale was used to determine importance of each item. Factors such as intellectual emphasis, practicality, advice of others, and social emphasis were addressed. Gender differences were discussed but the main focus of this study was between Upper and Lower Michigan students. It was found that high academic students, females, and low socioeconomic status students placed a greater emphasis on college costs and location. Higher socioeconomic status and low academic students placed a higher emphasis on social opportunities.

Gilmour (1978) was another researcher that dealt with the issue of the decision to attend college. He conducted interviews with nearly five hundred students, selected randomly, from Pennsylvania State University and six of its' branch campuses, as well as six local high schools. He found that students who received a great deal of encouragement to attend college from their parents were more likely to attend selective institutions. Gilmour attempted to develop a paradigm that described the college choice process. He stated that the process fell into six phases: the decision to attend college, the development of a list of colleges, the application decision, the application process, acceptances, and final college choice. Gilmour found that students whose parents had high educational attainment were more likely to emphasize the importance of programs and high academic reputation, but were less likely to show concern over costs. Those

students had a greater interest in the social backgrounds of students and in extracurricular activities. However, encouragement from peers had little relationship to the type of institution selected.

Gilmour also found that the college selection process was closely intertwined with the selection of a vocation and the choice of a high school curriculum. Simply put, the student decides what he or she wants to do in life, takes the necessary classes, and selects the college that fits that mold. The assumption that students made career plans when entering high school was found throughout the study.

Each study of higher education and college-going behavior can be classified in one of two primary categories: macro-level and micro-level studies. Macro-level studies, such as Hood and Swanson's, focus on the relationships between the enrollment behavior of student groups and various characteristics (environmental, institutional, student). The relationship between behavior and characteristics is studied across both groups at one point in time and across many years for one group. Such studies are designed to describe, explain, or predict total enrollment. A weakness of this type of study is that it relies on group data so it can be measured in terms of group averages, which are unable to reflect variations of individual students.

Micro-level studies, such as Gilmour or Stordahl's, focus on the relationships between the enrollment behavior of individual students and the same (environmental, institutional, student) characteristics. These relationships are studied with many students at one point in time. Such studies are designed to estimate the effect of various characteristics on the probability that a student will make certain decisions, such as going to college. A weakness of this type of study is that it is cross-sectional in nature and is

difficult to attach meaning to large groups of students. A majority of micro-level studies rely on case study methods or anecdotal descriptions.

The decisions that students make about attending college can no doubt have a lasting impact on their lives. Increased education can lead to higher salaries, longer working lives, more career mobility, and a higher quality of life (Bowen, 1977; Leslie and Brinkman, 1988). A common belief in American society is that higher education is an investment that benefits those who earn college degrees. Leslie and Brinkman (1988) concluded, in a book on college benefits that utilized a cluster sample of the American population, that college graduates earn twelve to fifteen percent more money than the average high school graduate, are less likely to be unemployed for long periods, and are less likely to miss work due to health related problems for extended periods. Bowen (1977) stated, in his interviews with college graduates, that they also report being happier and more satisfied with life.

While there is a great deal of research and scholarly writing on the subject of college choice, a majority of it deals with what students look for in an institution. In the last few years, scholars have developed models of student college choice that consider how typical traditional-age students go about making post-secondary decisions. These models often do not benefit from original research but are representations of previous research. Institutional characteristics are, for the most part, left out of college choice models.

Perhaps the most cited researcher in the area of college choice is Donald Hossler. Hossler has written extensively on the subject of college choice and has participated in numerous research projects on the subject. In a report to the Association for the Study of

Higher Education, based on research conducted with student and parent data from the Indiana College Placement and Assessment Center, Hossler (1985) posited that there are three stages in the college decision making process: predisposition, search, and choice. During the predisposition stage, students decide whether or not they want to continue their education beyond high school. The search stage is characterized by students' development of knowledge of the attributes of colleges and what attributes they may be looking for. In the choice stage, students determine which college to attend. This model often serves as a framework for other research in the area of student college choice for it conveys how students go about the process of making college choice decisions.

Students use a variety of sources of information during the search stage. Based on Gilmour's interviews with high school seniors, these sources include college guidebooks, friends, campus visits, and college publications. Hossler (1999) also added the Internet to this list of sources. The information desired from such sources includes indications of academic quality, cost, career availability, financial aid, and helpfulness of instructors (Lewis and Morrison, 1975). Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds tend to use fewer sources of information than do students from high socioeconomic backgrounds (Tierney, 1980).

In 1984 the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching surveyed one thousand high school seniors as to the sources of information, and information desired, they used in deciding on a college. Information desired by the students was ranked in order by the researchers and consisted of costs, financial aid, academic programs, campus life, faculty, and living characteristics. The sources most often used were college publications, letters from colleges, high school counselors, college guides, college

representatives, and campus visits. Students found campus visits as the most important source of information, but few took them. When asked about what individuals was the most important factor in influencing college choice, 32% of the students said their parents. Friends accounted for 14%, counselors accounted for 9 %, and high school teachers accounted for 6%. While the research did not account for the college choice decision itself, it is important to determine where students get the information to make that decision. Where their information came from helps researchers identify the criteria used when making the college choice decision.

Various characteristics of prospective students have been found to be associated with the type of college or university selected for enrollment. Family socioeconomic status is related to the quality of the institution students apply to and attend (Tierney, 1980). High socioeconomic status students tend to pick more exclusive institutions than lower socioeconomic status students. In an extensive review of literature on the student college choice process, Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989) found few studies that focused on how students identified a desirable set of institutional characteristics. The authors did find needed information on family socioeconomic status. They found that students from high socioeconomic backgrounds were more likely to apply to and attend selective institutions than were students from low and middle socioeconomic backgrounds. However, the cost of the institution students selected did not appear to be related to family socioeconomic status. This review is considered a landmark work and is cited with almost every mention of college choice.

Hossler and Gallagher (1987) began their review of literature on college choice in an opinion piece in College and University. In it they elaborated on the three-phase

model of college choice and further defined the model to include the process students go through at each stage.

In an original research study published in College and University, Hossler (1982) surveyed seven hundred twenty eight high school seniors from twelve high schools in the Los Angeles area about the perceived economic benefits of college. The participants were chosen by cluster sampling and given a closed-ended questionnaire that asked about the perceived importance of income and college. Using SPSS, an analysis of the distribution of responses revealed that 67% of the participants had planned to enroll in college and that 97% expected to earn more money by doing so. 86% of the students listed higher income as a reason for going to college, and more students claimed they would go to college as income difference became greater. High socioeconomic status was used as a control variable and high socioeconomic status students expected a greater income from college attendance than their peers, but placed less importance on that income. The economic benefit did not seem to be a motivating factor for this group of students. High ability students were more likely to attend college without the likelihood of a good paying job. Gender did not appear to have any impact on the study, but race did. Minority students were more motivated by salary and responded that income was an important reason to go to college more often than their peers.

Student academic ability is another student characteristic associated with the choice of colleges and universities. In a good example of cluster sampling, Tierney (1982) selected Pennsylvania high school students who took the ACT and surveyed them about their college choice decisions. Out of sixty four thousand seven hundred forty-eight students, a cluster of five hundred ninety-nine were selected and surveyed. He found that

students with similar characteristics chose similar characteristics in colleges. It was determined that groups that looked alike (such as high socioeconomic status), tended to choose the same characteristics in an institution (such as private or religious). Tierney found that high ability students were not only more likely to attend selective institutions, but were also more likely to select out-of-state institutions. Conversely, low ability students were more likely to attend less selective, in-state institutions.

Students' decisions to attend particular types of institutions can be influenced by state policies and the types of institutions that predominate in a given geographical region. In states having state scholarship programs that provide a generous level of aid, Zemsky and Oedel (1983) found that students were more likely to attend private institutions.

Zemsky and Oedel wrote a book on the structure of college choice in which the idea was to cover socioeconomic and educational characteristics of students and families from the Northeast United States. The authors relied on previous reviews of the literature on college choice to make their points. The authors discovered that the higher the academic ability of a student, the greater the concern about academic standards, programs, and cost. They observed that these high ability students tend to be less concerned about careers, campus climate, and financial assistance. There is some evidence, the authors state, that these students tend to have broader limits (i.e., distance from home, cost, institution size) in searching and applying for colleges. These students are more likely to go far from home to college than lower academic ability students. The authors also learned that students are more likely to attend private institutions if they reside in states in which a large number of private colleges and universities are located.

Students living in a state with many diverse institutions are more likely to attend an in-state institution.

The educational level of students' parents and the parents' encouragement of college attendance are also associated with the type of institution students select. As parental educational level increases, students are more likely to apply to and attend more selective institutions (Hearn, 1984). Also, students whose parents have a high level of education tend to select private colleges and universities over public institutions (Litten, 1983).

In a research paper presented to the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Hossler (1991) examined a longitudinal data set (ninth through twelfth grade students from Indiana) to establish questions about the perceived importance students place on certain college attributes as part of their college choice process. Using factor analysis, analysis of variance, and discriminate analysis on data from a representative sample of one hundred ten students, the study established a series of discrepancy scores to indicate to what extent a student believed an attribute was important versus the extent the attribute was present in their first choice of college. The results showed that family background characteristics, others the student talked to about college, sources of information about the institutions, and activities to learn about the colleges, affected different attributes in different ways. Friend's opinions and campus visits can have either a positive or negative effect on the college choice decision of the student. Hossler stated that parental encouragement was the best predictor of going to college for all students. Some variables mattered on all attributes, but location and interpersonal involvement were the most important characteristics according to the students. Neither academic

achievement nor educational aspirations affected any of the attributes. Hossler based this paper on his research with Stage (1987). Litten (1982) acknowledged a variation of this research in an opinion article on college choice, in which he stated that parental education is the strongest influence on the college choice decision.

In an updated, more in-depth version of his research with Indiana high school students, Hossler's (1999) book, Going to College, focused on the same data set (ninth grade through twelfth grade students) as his earlier work. This longitudinal study, conducted from 1986 to 1994, consisted of a cluster sample of four thousand nine hundred twenty three students from twenty-one high schools and their parents. The largest group of students was surveyed while in school, but a chosen sub-sample of fifty-six students was followed after graduation. These students and their parents were interviewed periodically. Anecdotal evidence was given to show that, among other things, students' perceptions changed over time. Through the interviews Hossler learned that parental encouragement had a significant impact on college decisions at an early age, but became less important when the college choice decision was made. Hossler also learned that parents' education had a strong effect on the college aspirations of students and an even stronger effect on the actualization of their plans. Half of the students whose parents had at least a high school diploma attended college, and almost seventy-five percent whose parents had a college degree attended. It was also found that parental income had a significant effect on students attending college. About nineteen percent of the students, whose parent's income was below fifteen thousand dollars (poverty level), attended college; whereas more than fifty-eight percent of the students whose parents' income was more than forty-five thousand dollars attended college. It was shown that

while income did not make a difference in student aspirations early on, it did have an effect on students' actions when it came time to make college choice decisions. Parental income was a major factor in what type of institution the students considered.

Few studies have addressed the influence of ethnicity on college choice (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989). However, Hearn (1985) asked, "Who goes where?" in a paper on college choice behavior. Data for one thousand six hundred eight students were drawn from the "High School and Beyond" survey of 1980 United States high school seniors. What Hearn attempted to find was whether minority, female, and low-income students were disproportionately attending less selective and lower cost institutions. Hearn assessed three sets of student characteristics: ascribed (race, ethnicity, and gender), socioeconomic status (parental income, parents' education, and family size), and academic achievement (tested ability, school grades, activities, and educational expectations). Hearn found that African Americans, females, and lower socioeconomic status students were more likely to attend lower selectivity institutions, and lower socioeconomic students were more likely to attend lower cost institutions, while African Americans were not as likely to attend lower cost institutions. Academically strong students were more likely to attend more selective institutions and higher cost institutions. Students whose parental income was lower, or whose education was less, were likely to attend lower selectivity institutions, even if they had high academic ability and achievements. Other important indicators of entry into a selective institution were educational expectations, grades, and school activities. Hearn also noted that African American students were less likely to apply to more selective institutions, even when their academic ability and socioeconomic status were high.

Perhaps the largest research study in the area of college choice was completed by Manski and Wise (1983). This landmark work resulted in the book College Choice in America. The authors' analyzed data collected through the National Longitudinal Study of the high school class of 1972. The data set included over twenty-three thousand twelfth grade students from one thousand three hundred high schools chosen by a stratified random sample throughout the United States. The data were collected by questionnaires and a follow-up survey. The study dealt at length with the issues of race and gender in making post-secondary decisions. The authors found that white males were most likely to attend college. White females were not as likely to attend college as white males, but were more likely to attend than non-white males or females. Non-white males were more likely to attend college than non-white females. When all other factors were similar, non-white students were twice as likely as whites to apply to college. The racial difference between applying for college and attending college was addressed. The authors stated this finding was misleading because few non-white students were similar to white students in regard to parental education and family income.

Manski and Wise (1983) also accounted for regional variations in college selection. They found that African American students in the South went to lower quality schools than did similar white students in the South, but African American students in the non-South went to somewhat higher quality schools than did white students in the non-South. The authors attributed this to the existence of "so-called" predominantly black schools in the South. Lewis and Morrison also used this data set in their report on enrollment trends that stated that non-white students tended to attend less selective and lower cost institutions.

Another researcher using the data from the National Longitudinal Study was Jackson (1986). He charted the research through 1980 and focused on the choice of college and non-college options. Based on this data and a review of empirical and theoretical work on college choice, Jackson identified thirteen critical variables (cost, location, programs, etc.) and ten non-critical variables (high school counselor, friends, social attributes, etc.) that might influence college choice. He used this data to create a model of college choice. Jackson's model has three stages: preference, exclusion, and evaluation. Jackson stated that in the first stage academic achievement has the strongest correlation with students' educational attainment. He stated that students with high academic achievement were more likely to go to college especially when parental encouragement and parental education were high. He also stated that students, whose own educational or occupational aspirations were high, were more likely to attend college. Race was also a factor in attending college. Whites were more likely to attend college than non-whites when all other factors are similar. In the second stage Jackson used economic theory to describe decision making as an excluding process. Jackson stated that high family income was a positive factor in regard to college choice. The third stage is where a final college decision is made. Social factors have some influence in this stage. Students were more likely to attend college when they were not married and when more peers planned on going to college. Jackson rated the variables (location, cost, job prospects) used in the first two stages and concluded that social conditions can define initial lists of schools for consideration.

Welki and Navratil (1987) attempted to determine college applicants' perceptions of college choice. A questionnaire consisting of twenty-seven items was sent to

approximately one thousand students applicants who were accepted for admission to John Carroll University in 1984 and 1985. Institutional characteristics accounted for the bulk of the questionnaire. The authors found that students chose a specific institution based on curriculum offerings, distance from home, and tuition costs. Race, gender, and socioeconomic status were not addressed.

Various institutional characteristics have also been found to be important in the choice stage. Paulsen (1990) wrote an excellent review of college choice research in a monograph. He attempted to define the parameters of college choice based on student characteristics (race, gender, socioeconomic status, academic achievement), institutional characteristics (tuition, financial aid, location, curriculum), and the interaction between the two. He found that when students were asked to rate the characteristics of institutions important in their decision to apply to or attend a particular college or university, the characteristics cited most often were (in rank order): special academic programs, tuition costs, availability of financial aid, academic reputation, location (or distance from home), size, and social atmosphere.

However, the weighting of institutional characteristics varied for different types of students. For academically able students, perceived quality was the most influential institutional characteristic (Litten, 1983). Paulsen (1990) found through his review of research that there was a significant relationship between various sets of institutional and student characteristics. Certain institutional characteristics: selectivity, cost, and distance from home, were found to have significant relationships with certain student characteristics. These characteristics were: sex, race, parental education, parental income, parental encouragement, aptitude, achievement, and college aspirations. Whites, males,

and students with high socioeconomic status were more likely to attend highly selective institutions far from home. African Americans and females tended to choose lower cost and less selective institutions. Through these relationships Paulsen found that, in terms of institutional characteristics, the attractiveness of a college tends to increase when: tuition is lower, financial aid is greater, distance from home is less, admissions selectivity is higher, and curriculum offerings are greater.

In a similarly styled study by Toutkoushian (1999), socio-economic status proved to be a valid indicator for college choice. This review of SAT data from New Hampshire high school graduates showed that students with college-educated parents tended to choose institutions where they felt a connection with the student body. It was surmised that these students chose an institution that had a student body similar in characteristics to themselves and their peers.

In one of the few research projects reported by an institution, Blinn College in Texas surveyed all students in their 1993-1994 class. Over five thousand students were surveyed about college decision factors and expectations. The top five factors that influenced students to attend Blinn College were: facilities, faculty reputation, academic reputation, size of institution and classes, and low costs. Ninety-four percent of the surveyed students stated that they had consulted the college catalog in acquiring information about the college in order to make a college choice. Demographic data on the participants was not used.

Another large sample of students was used in a recent study on college decision-making. Espinoza (2002) used data from the College Board's Admitted Student Questionnaire to determine college choice factors. A total of 68,428 students representing

122 institutions were represented. Though there was a distinct “disconnect” in the data reported on the 20-question survey and the enrollment behavior of the students (campus visits were important / few took them), several college choice factors did arise. School reputation and academic major were the highest rated factors, followed closely by institution facilities. The lowest rated factor dealt with cost.

Hoyt and Brown (2003) conducted a two-fold study on college choice. The first part was a literature review on the subject of college choice. Twenty-two studies were summarized to produce the top-ten college choice factors reported. Academic reputation was reported as being first followed by location of institution. The least reported factor was campus facilities. The authors included information on factors mentioned, but not reported. The authors also recommend more research to develop a standardized instrument for college choice.

A second part to the study by Hoyt and Brown (2003) was a research study performed at Utah Valley State College. Four hundred ninety-four students who went to college in Utah were sampled randomly on college choice. A 33-question questionnaire developed by the researchers from their review of literature was used. The top factors reported were location of institution, program major, and cost. A second group of participants were 6,718 students who graduated from high school in Utah, but went to college out of state. This group of data came from ACT data on Utah high school graduates. The top two factors from this group included program major and school reputation.

The institutional characteristics that have been mentioned thus far - academic quality, costs, and geographical location - are fixed institutional characteristics. Such

characteristics are difficult for an institution to alter. However, financial aid is a fluid institutional characteristic and is subject to change by the individual institution.

Although students suggest that financial aid influences their choice of college or university, research indicates that this influence is modest. In general, receiving financial aid increases the chances that an accepted applicant will enroll by 8 1/2% (Jackson, 1978). The effects of aid, however, are greater in certain situations for particular types of prospective students. Students whose parental income is lower are more influenced by aid (Trusty, 2000).

Several factors have been left out of the literature on college choice. While researchers spend time on how students make the decision to attend college, and what criteria they look for when making their decisions, little research has been done on specific groups of students, such as student athletes. Researchers focus their findings to account for race, gender, and socioeconomic status, but not for other groups of students. Definitive terms such as athlete or class leaders have not been accounted for in the literature. Valedictorians and high achievers have been followed somewhat, as have been low achievers, but other groups such as student athletes have not been traced. It would be valuable to researchers to find out how these groups of students make their decisions.

Studies on the College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes

While there is considerable research on college choice, little of it pertains specifically to college choice by student athletes. Some literature does exist that discusses the recruitment of student athletes, but it is primarily composed of opinion pieces about the recruiting process.

The environment student athletes live in can sometimes cloud their college choice decisions. A 1981 NCAA survey of 2,116 college football players in the United States found that aspects of the athletic program were more important in college choice than academic issues. When asked to rank certain college choice criteria in order, the winning tradition of the athletic program was first, followed closely by the college head coach. The study was not divided by race or any other sub-group.

Mathes and Gurney (1985) conducted a study of 231 student athletes at Iowa State University. This was 58% of all student athletes on campus. The student athletes were given a 59-item questionnaire on college choice criteria during their study sessions and the results were categorized by race, gender, and scholarship level. The 59 items were divided into five dependant variables: academics, coach, campus, athletics, and friends. The highest rated criteria for the student athletes were academic reputation, college head coach, reputation of the athletic conference, and the reputation of the school's sports teams. The researchers found that males rated athletic responses higher than females, and full scholarship student athletes rated the same responses higher than partial scholarship student athletes. They found that athletic specific responses were cited most frequently. This begins to show that student athletes do not cite the same criteria in selecting a college as traditional students.

Rooney (1987), who is considered by many scholars to be the foremost researcher in the area of athletics, wrote about the recruiting process of student athletes but did not account for college choice criteria. His book The Recruiting Game reported considerable data on where student athletes came from and where they went to college, but he gave no mention of how the student athletes selected their college of choice. He wrote about the

recruiting efforts of colleges and suggested that some policies need to be changed, but did not mention how students made up their minds. He stated that in his opinion the best athletic recruiters made the decisions for the student athletes.

Thelin and Wiseman (1989) wrote about the balance of athletics and academics in college. While dealing with finances and oversight, they did not mention college choice of students even though they touched on the issue of admissions and student athletes. Their assumption was that student athletes were recruited and the athletic recruiter made the college choice decision for them.

Andre and James (1991) wrote about the possible restructuring of college athletics in general, but did not discuss the college choice process. They concerned themselves with issues of accountability and reform and the role of sports on campus. Though enlightening, their only mention of recruiting or student choice came through a discussion of admission standards.

Figone (1989), as well as Walsh and Turbo (1997), and Mallonee (1996) gave step-by-step guidelines to college admissions for student athletes wishing to play collegiate athletics. Each step included a checklist of what to do and when in regard to the recruiting process. Each of these works attempted to inform the student athlete and only mentioned college choice criteria. It was implied that the college choice decision was made somehow, though the process, or criteria, were not described.

DiSalvo and DiGeronimo (1993) gave a better understanding of how the recruiting process works. They gave suggestions, based on research by others on the subject, as to how the student athlete can be better prepared for the recruiting process and how to go about gaining admission into his or her college of choice. The authors gave

anecdotal suggestions along with case studies to provide the “do’s and don’ts” of athletic recruiting. College choice seemed to be secondary to the purpose of continuing to be a student athlete. The assumption seemed to be that the individual would go to college whether or not athletics were involved. Hoch (1999) also gave recommendations as to how a student athlete could continue his or her sports career in college. College choice of institution once again seemed to be of little concern.

Gerdy (1997) was one of very few writers to specifically mention college choice by student athletes. He stated that in his opinion “the first formal contact with the institution is the major factor in attending” (p 64). He did not back up this statement with any kind of empirical data. It was unclear what Gerdy meant by “first formal contact”. He alludes to attending a game on campus and receiving letters in the mail. The rest of his work dealt with unrealistic or mistaken expectations by the student athlete or the athletic coach and how to avoid them.

One of the few studies that dealt with college choice by student athletes was a journal article by Gabert, Hale, and Montalvo, (1999). This study centered on 246 randomly chosen freshmen student athletes from NCAA Divisions 1, 1-AA, and NAIA member schools. Fifteen-question surveys on college choice were mailed to the student athletes and the results gathered. The survey did not use background data such as race, sport played, or socio-economic status. The survey did account for gender. The results showed that men and women answered almost identically. The student athlete’s college choice decision was shown to be influenced most by the college head coach. Location of institution was also a highly ranked criterion. This study did not delve any further into the college choice process.

Summary

A great deal of research has been done in the area of college choice. The most prominent research on the subject on college choice comes from Hossler in various forms (1987, 1989, 1991, 1995). Others who have richly contributed to the body of work on college choice include Hearn (1984), Jackson (1978), McDonough (1997), Manski and Wise (1993) and Paulsen (1990). While the vast majority of the literature is about the college choice process and, as Hossler (1999) describes it, the stages a person goes through when decisions about going to college are made, little information is found about how certain groups of people make college choice decisions. Literature exists that account for social status (Hearn, 1984; McDonough, 1997), race (Hearn, 1984; Jackson, 1978; Manski, 1983), family income (Chapman, 1986; Leslie and Brinkman, 1988), gender (Hearn, 1984; Lewis and Morrison, 1975; Litten, 1982), and academic ability (Hearn, 1984; Paulsen, 1990; Zemsky and Oedel, 1983). Although student athletes have these kinds of attributes, virtually nothing accounts for athletic ability as a basis for going to college.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine what criteria student athletes at one major institution reported as being most important in their college choice selection. The examination of student athletes is important because this group of students has seldom been accounted for in college choice research. Adding specific groups of students (such as student athletes) to the literature on college choice is important in adding to the body of knowledge on the subject. While gender, race, and socioeconomic status have been addressed in college choice research, the interactions of these criteria with sports participation have not. What were the criteria used by student athletes in selecting their school of choice? Are there similarities or differences in the criteria used based on demographic categories such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in? Are the criteria student athletes used in making this decision similar to the data on general student populations?

Research Design

This research used a cross-sectional survey research design to study college choice decisions of student athletes at the University of Tennessee.

Site and Population

The University of Tennessee was chosen as the site for the study due to its accessibility and its reputation as a prominent athletic institution. The University of Tennessee is significant in that it is in one of the most prestigious athletic conferences in

the nation. The University's athletic history dates to the formal recognition and regulation of college athletics. University of Tennessee teams compete at the NCAA division 1-A level against the top athletic schools in the nation and regularly compete for conference and national championships. The University of Tennessee has produced national champions and/or All-Americans in virtually every sport it sponsors. It is benefited by having modern facilities and strong fiscal revenue. The athletics' program at Tennessee is one of the largest and most successful in the country in terms of athletics' competition and as a multimillion-dollar business.

Student athletes involved in the University of Tennessee men's and women's athletic programs constituted the population of the study. The University had approximately 450 student athletes (454 listed on roster) as of January 2004 competing in 16 sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, football, men's and women's golf, men's and women's track and field (indoor, outdoor, and cross country), women's soccer, women's softball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, women's volleyball and women's rowing. These athletes were on full scholarship, partial scholarship (any grant-in-aid that does not cover all costs), or were considered non-scholarship (no athletic grant-in-aid of any kind).

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used for the study (Appendix A) was developed by the researcher based on college choice research of the past twenty years conducted by Hossler (1991), Jackson (1978), Manski (1983), and others. The questionnaire developed asked the student athletes to respond to five demographic categories (sport played, race,

gender, parents educational level, and scholarship level). Demographic data as to gender was extracted from information given about sport participation. The student athletes were asked to rank on a Likert-type scale (1 - not considered, 2 - not at all important, 3 - not very important, 4 - important, 5 - very important) a list of twenty-seven reasons for their college choice selection.

The first twelve criteria reflected common criteria students tend to consider when choosing a college. These criteria were taken from research on college athletics conducted by various researchers [Andre and James (1991), Disalvo, and DiGeronimo (1993), Figone (1989), Gerdy (1997), Hoch (1999), and Rooney (1987)]. The additional criteria (questions thirteen through twenty-seven) were added by the researcher in response to the distinctive nature of college athletics and of the culture in which college student athletes reside. Some of these additional criteria were taken from recommendations made by the aforementioned researchers.

The survey instrument was field tested with a group of 45 high school student athletes at Clay County High School in Tennessee. The instrument was field tested to see if it was clear and easy to understand. The high school student athletes had no problem understanding the instrument or what it was asking for.

Procedures

The directors of both Men's and Women's Athletics at the University of Tennessee were asked in writing for their permission to allow their student athletes to participate in the study (Appendix B). Both athletic directors were advised of the purpose of the study and given a copy of the survey instrument for their approval. A follow-up

phone call to both athletic directors within two weeks of the letter being sent was used as a reminder. Upon their verbal approval, the athletic directors were asked to identify contact people for each sport. These contact people (often the head coach) were called and a date and time to meet each team was arranged.

The researcher administered and collected the questionnaires while the student athletes were in their required team meetings. Since these meeting were mandatory, this was the easiest way to approach the task of reaching a majority of the student athletes. The researcher explained to the assembled student athletes what the study was about, that participation was voluntary, and that all responses would be confidential. Each questionnaire had a cover sheet that explained participation and informed consent. This cover sheet was read aloud by the researcher at the beginning of each meeting.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee (Appendix C). Under University of Tennessee Institutional Review Board guidelines for research involving human subjects, this research study was exempt from full review. Since no identifying characteristics were used in regard to respondents, and no risk was involved, form A was used.

Student athletes being surveyed were guaranteed confidentiality with the exception of descriptive information (sport participated in, background data). All data is stored, under locked conditions, in the departmental office (room 233 Claxton Addition) of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University of Tennessee. Access is available only to the researcher, the doctoral committee, and department personnel.

The questionnaires were administered to traditional-age full-time student athletes who were registered for the spring semester of 2004. An attempt was made to survey all

454 student athletes. A response rate of 80% was hoped for, but 90% (or 408) was attained. Some student athletes missed team meetings due to injuries or unforeseen circumstances. Some teams had completed their season earlier in the year and the number of team members did not reflect their roster number. Graduating seniors did not participate, nor did players newly arrived on campus at that point. Had all individuals been surveyed during, or prior to, their competitive season the response rate would have been higher.

Data Analysis

When all teams had been surveyed, the researcher manually entered the results into the computer. A data table was created that could be utilized to answer each research question. SPSS was used in the tabulation of data.

To determine what criteria student athletes reported as being most important in their college choice decision, simple percentages were calculated. A mean for each question was also calculated. The criteria were ranked by mean to give each sub-group of student athletes a basis for comparison. Since the study was a population study, simple comparisons were used.

Each research question resulted in a number of master tables. It was from these tables that other tables reflecting the top five and bottom five criteria were developed. This method was chosen to narrow the comparisons to the top five and bottom five criteria for each group.

To determine if the criteria selected by the student athletes differed by gender, race, socioeconomic level, scholarship level, or sport, a comparison of the groups' means,

from the answers given to the list of 27 criteria, was made. The criteria compared utilized only the top five and bottom five criteria based on mean.

Information about the respondent's sex was extracted from the sport they reported they played, since the University of Tennessee does not recognize co-educational sports. Responses by race were compared and it was necessary to condense race groups to Caucasian and non-Caucasian due to some races having very few respondents, if any. A majority of the participants were Caucasian.

Socioeconomic status information came from information provided about parental education. This method has been used by many researchers to define socioeconomic status [Hearn (1984), Hossler (1999), Jackson (1978), and MacDermott (1987)]. Even though there were more than two groups of respondents, the same comparison method was used.

A score was calculated for the educational attainment of each parent. The numbers attributed to the instrument ranged from "0" for an absent parent, "1" if the parent did not graduate high school, "2" if the parent did graduate high school, "3" if the parent had some college, "4" for a college graduate, and "5" for an advanced degree. The score for each parent was added together to give a cumulative score for reporting purposes. Though there were six possible responses for each parent's educational level, these categories were combined and reduced to three. A score of "1" indicated that either both parents, or one parent in a single parent home, had the equivalency of a high school degree or less. A score of "2" indicated that only one parent had any college experience. It could be a single parent home with college experience, or a two parent home in which only one parent attended college. A score of "3" indicated that both parents had at least

attended college. This method has been used by several researchers to reduce responses to a workable number (Hearn, 1984 and Paulsen, 1990).

To determine if the criteria student athletes reported differed from the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice, a simple comparison with the literature on the subject of college choice was used.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This study was designed to determine what criteria student athletes at one major institution reported as being most and least important in their college choice selection. Secondly, the objective was to determine if there were similarities or differences among the criteria between sub-groups of student athletes based on gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, and sport participated in. The final objective was to compare these findings with the data that exists for general student populations.

Description of Population

The population was drawn from student athletes at the University of Tennessee who were enrolled full-time the spring semester of 2004. The University had approximately 450 student athletes as of January 2004 (454 listed on roster). These athletes were either on full scholarship, partial scholarship, or were considered non-scholarship.

Ninety percent of the student athletes (408 out of 454) participated. These participants competed in 16 sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, football, men's and women's golf, men's and women's track and field (indoor, outdoor, and cross-country), women's soccer, women's softball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, women's volleyball and women's rowing.

There were 234 male participants, which accounted for 57.4 percent of the population. There were 174 female participants that made up the remaining 42.6 percent (see TABLE 4.1).

Table 4.1: Gender of Participants

	Number	Percent
Male	234	57.4
Female	174	42.6
Total	408	100.0

When student athletes were asked what race they considered themselves, 275 responded Caucasian, 110 – African American, 8 – Latino, 1 – Native American, 1 – Asian American, 3 – Pacific Islander, and 10 considered themselves of mixed race background (see TABLE 4.2). For the purpose of data analysis, race was defined by only two groups: Caucasian and non-Caucasian. This was done due to the small number of some groups. Caucasian student athletes accounted for 67.4 percent (275) of the participants, while 32.6 percent (133) were non-Caucasian (see TABLE 4.3).

Socio-economic status was obtained from parental education levels. Though there were six possible responses for each parent's educational level (did not graduate high school, graduated high school, some college, college graduate, advanced degree, or unknown / absent), these categories were combined and reduced to three. This was done to have a workable number of categories. Single parent families were folded into either of the first two groups. Participants who reported that either both parents, or a single parent in a single parent home, had a high school degree or less, accounted for 11.3 percent, or 46, of the responses. Participants who had only one parent with college experience, whether a one or two parent home, accounted for 20.1 percent, or 82, of the responses. The largest group was those who had both parents with college experience or better. There were 280, or 68.6 percent, of them (see TABLE 4.4).

Table 4.2: Race of Participants

	Number	Percent
Africa-American	110	27.0
Asian-American	1	.2
Latino /Latina	8	2.0
Native American	1	.2
Pacific Islander	3	.7
Mixed	10	2.5
Caucasian	275	67.4
Total	408	100.0

Table 4.3: Race of Participants Combined

	Number	Percent
Non-Caucasian	133	32.6
Caucasian	275	67.4
Total	408	100.0

Table 4.4: Parental Education Level of Participants

	Number	Percent
One or both parents - High School or less	46	11.3
One parent with college	82	20.1
Both parents with college	280	68.6
Total	408	100.0

As for scholarship level, 156 participants reported being on full athletic scholarship. This was equal to 38.2 percent. Full athletic scholarship was defined as, “all costs associated with attending the university being paid by the university’s athletic department.” Partial athletic scholarship participants equaled 147 or 36.1 percent. Partial athletic scholarship was defined as “any amount of cost associated with attending the university, though less than 100 percent, being paid by the university’s athletic department.” Non-scholarship participants totaled 105 or 25.6 percent. The university’s athletic department paid no percentage of the cost of the university for this group. Although some student athletes did receive academic financial aid, as well as other sources of aid, this information was not included in this study. Some sports had inordinate amounts of some scholarship levels. Mostly this was due to finances and NCAA regulations. Non-revenue producing sports such as golf, tennis, or rowing had a higher percentage of non-scholarship and partial scholarship student athletes than sports such as football that generate vast sums of money. NCAA regulations only allow sports to have a certain percentage of student athletes on full scholarship. Some sports allocate their scholarship limits into more partial scholarship (see TABLE 4.5).

Table 4.5: Scholarship Level of Participants

	Number	Percent
Full	156	38.2
Partial	147	36.1
Non-scholarship	105	25.6
Total	408	100.0

Of the seven men's sports, football had the most participants with 93. This also accounted for 22.8 percent of all student athletes and 39.7 percent of all male student athletes. Track and field had the next highest group with 53, or 13 percent of all student athletes (22.6 percent of all male student athletes). Baseball had 31 participants. They accounted for 7.6 percent of all student athletes, or 13.2 percent of all male student athletes. 23 people, or 5.6 percent of all student athletes, participated in swimming and diving. This was 9.8 percent of all male student athletes. Basketball had 17 participants, or 4.2 percent of all student athletes. This was only 7.3 percent of all male student athletes. Eleven student athletes, or 2.7 percent of all student athletes and 4.7 percent of all male student athletes, participated in golf. The lowest numbered group was tennis with 6. This accounted for 1.5 percent of all student athletes and 2.6 percent of all male student athletes. The NCAA governing body sets the number of student athletes that a sport can have. Non-scholarship student athletes that practice with a sports team, though they only count as practice players, were included in this survey (see TABLE 4.6).

Table 4.6: Men's Sports

	Number	Percent of Males	Total Percent
Baseball	31	13.2	7.6
Track and Field	53	22.6	13.0
Golf	11	4.7	2.7
Swimming and Diving	23	9.8	5.6
Basketball	17	7.3	4.2
Football	93	39.7	22.8
Tennis	6	2.6	1.5
Total	234	100.0	57.4

Table 4.7: Women's Sports

	Number	Percent of Females	Total Percent
Softball	19	10.9	4.7
Track and Field	35	20.1	8.6
Golf	6	3.4	1.5
Swimming and Diving	20	11.5	4.9
Rowing	43	24.7	10.5
Basketball	11	6.3	2.7
Volleyball	13	7.5	3.2
Tennis	9	5.2	2.2
Soccer	18	10.3	4.4
Total	174	100.0	42.6

Title IX has drastically increased the number of females competing in athletics. Table 4.7 shows the number of female student athletes competing in athletics at the University of Tennessee. Of the nine women's sports, rowing had the highest number of participants with 43. This accounted for 10.5 percent of all student athletes and 24.7 percent of all female student athletes. They were followed by track and field with 35, or 8.6 percent of all student athletes and 20.1 percent of all female student athletes. Swimming and diving had 20 participants. This was 4.9 percent of all student athletes, or 11.5 percent of all female student athletes. Nineteen, or 4.7 percent of all student athletes and 10.9 percent of all female student athletes, participated in softball. Soccer followed with 4.4 percent of all student athletes. These 18 accounted for 10.3 percent of all female student athletes. Volleyball accounted for 13, or 3.2 percent of all student athletes and 7.5 percent of all female student athletes. Basketball accounted for 2.7 percent of all student

athletes and 6.3 percent of all female student athletes with 11. Only 9 participated in tennis. This was 2.2 percent of all student athletes and 5.2 percent of all female student athletes. Golf had the fewest participants with 6, which accounted for 1.4 percent of all student athletes, or 3.4 percent of all female student athletes.

Research Question #1

What criteria do student athletes report as being most and least important in their college choice decision?

The following tables display the responses given by all 408 student athletes at the University of Tennessee. The responses were ranked by mean to show the top criteria in selecting a college as reported by the student athletes. The responses were also ranked by mean to show the criteria that student athletes did not use in making their college choice decision. Table 4.8 shows student athlete responses to the survey in the order of highest mean scores.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by all student athletes, was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.21. The next highest reported criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.18. Athletic facilities and the school's sports program's reputation tied for third highest with a mean of 4.17. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with other players with a mean of 4.12. It is important to note that all top five criteria were related to athletics. Three of the criteria either dealt with a winning tradition, the quality of athletic structures, or connections with peers. Two criteria had to do with athletic reputation.

Table 4.8: Top Five Criteria for All Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	5.1%	1.7%	10.0%	33.3%	49.8%	4.21
Athletic Conference Reputation	4.9%	1.7%	9.8%	37.5%	46.1%	4.18
Athletic Facilities	2.5%	3.2%	13.2%	37.5%	43.6%	4.17
Sports Program's Reputation	4.7%	1.2%	10.3%	40.2%	43.6%	4.17
Comfort with Other Players	5.6%	2.0%	9.1%	41.7%	41.7%	4.12

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college reported by all student athletes was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 2.85. The fourth lowest reported criterion was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.63. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.44. The criterion dealing with school alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.33. The lowest rated criterion for all student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.11.

Four criteria were related to people and their lack of influence on the student athlete's decision on college choice. Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni could be personal or only known in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics: high school coach's recommendation (see TABLE 4.9). This is a departure from the top five criteria that were all related to athletics.

Table 4.9: Bottom Five Criteria for All Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.0%	27.2%	25.2%	8.8%	1.7%	2.11
School Alumni	37.3%	16.4%	25.7%	16.9%	3.7%	2.33
Friend's Recommendation	29.7%	20.3%	30.1%	16.2%	3.7%	2.44
College Guides and Publications	17.6%	26.5%	34.8%	16.9%	4.2%	2.63
High School Coach's Recommendation	22.3%	15.2%	26.2%	27.5%	8.8%	2.85

Research Question #2

Do the criteria student athletes reported as being most and least important in their college choice decision differ by different factors such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in?

Gender

Gender was obtained from the information given about the sport participated in. It is important to note that a number of researchers have used gender as an identifying category in their work on the subject of college choice. Female student athletes accounted for 42.6% of the participants.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by female student athletes, was comfort with other players with a mean of 4.06. The next highest reported criterion was athletic facilities with a mean of 4.03. School location was third highest with a mean of 3.94. Comfort with sport coaches was fourth highest with a mean of 3.89. The fifth highest rated criterion was the school's sports program's reputation with a mean of 3.88.

Four of the top five criteria were athletic specific and two criteria dealt with comfort with other people (see TABLE 4.10).

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by female student athletes, was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.53. The fourth lowest rated criterion was television exposure with a mean of 2.41. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.23. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.08. The lowest rated criterion for female student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.03. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but three were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete. Of the three criteria related to relationships, one was school related (high school guidance counselor) and one was of a personal nature (friend's recommendation). One of the relationship related criteria, school alumni, was unknown as to what type of relationship existed (see TABLE 4.11).

Table 4.10: Top Five Criteria for All Female Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	9.8%	1.1%	7.5%	36.8%	44.8%	4.06
Athletic Facilities	3.4%	4.0%	16.7%	37.9%	37.9%	4.03
School Location	.6%	5.2%	23.6%	41.4%	29.3%	3.94
Comfort with Sport Coaches	9.8%	3.4%	18.4%	25.3%	43.1%	3.89
Sports Program's Reputation	8.6%	2.3%	15.5%	39.7%	33.9%	3.88

Table 4.11: Bottom Five Criteria for All Female Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.9%	27.0%	29.3%	5.7%	.0%	2.03
School Alumni	43.1%	19.5%	24.1%	12.6%	.6%	2.08
Friend's Recommendation	35.6%	20.1%	31.6%	10.9%	1.7%	2.23
Television Exposure	35.6%	14.4%	29.9%	13.2%	6.9%	2.41
College Guides and Publications	15.5%	33.3%	34.5%	16.1%	.6%	2.53

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by male student athletes at the University of Tennessee, was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.47. The next highest reported criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.42. The school's sports program's reputation was third highest with a mean of 4.38. The criterion dealing with athletic facilities was fourth highest with a mean of 4.27. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with sport coaches with a mean of 4.20 (see TABLE 4.12).

All five of the top criteria were related to athletics. Two of the top criteria for male student athletes had to do with athletic reputation: the sports program and the athletic conference. This shows that the status of the University of Tennessee and the Southeastern Conference is a positive one. One criterion dealt with the winning tradition of the sports program. Another criterion dealt with the quality of athletic structures. The fifth criterion in the top five dealt with close relationships with coaches. Male student athletes accounted for a majority of the participants, or 57.4%.

Table 4.12: Top Five Criteria for All Male Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	2.1%	.4%	5.1%	33.3%	59.0%	4.47
Athletic Conference Reputation	2.1%	1.7%	3.8%	36.3%	56.0%	4.42
Sports Program's Reputation	1.7%	.4%	6.4%	40.6%	50.9%	4.38
Athletic Facilities	1.7%	2.6%	10.7%	37.2%	47.9%	4.27
Comfort with Sport Coaches	2.1%	2.6%	12.4%	39.3%	43.6%	4.20

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by male student athletes, was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 3.06. The fourth lowest rated criterion was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.71. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.59. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.52. The lowest rated criterion for male student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.17.

Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four of the criteria were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete. Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni could be personal or only known in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation (see TABLE 4.13).

Table 4.13: Bottom Five Criteria for All Male Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	36.3%	27.4%	22.2%	11.1%	3.0%	2.17
School Alumni	32.9%	14.1%	26.9%	20.1%	6.0%	2.52
Friend's Recommendation	25.2%	20.5%	29.1%	20.1%	5.1%	2.59
College Guides and Publications	19.2%	21.4%	35.0%	17.5%	6.8%	2.71
High School Coach's Recommendation	16.2%	15.4%	24.8%	32.9%	10.7%	3.06

There were three common criteria between the genders in the top five criteria: the school's sports program's reputation, athletic facilities, and comfort with sport coaches. Comfort with sport coaches could have been defined as comfort with the head coach or an assistant coach. Male student athletes also included an opportunity to win championships and the school's athletic conference reputation in spots one and two, respectively. Female student athletes listed comfort with other players as their first choice, and school location as their third.

There were four commonalities between genders in the bottom five criteria. Both groups had the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation, school alumni, and their friend's recommendation first, second, and third respectively. College guides and publications was the other criteria that both groups had in their bottom five. The only difference was that male student athletes mentioned their high school coach's recommendation, and female student athletes mentioned television exposure.

Race

Though there were seven possible responses as to the race question, this was reduced to two due to some groups having very little representation. Caucasian and non-Caucasian were deemed to be the best combination due to the high number of Caucasian participants (275 out of 408). Any other reduction would have been even more skewed. Caucasian student athletes accounted for 67.4% of the participants.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by Caucasian student athletes, was athletic facilities with a mean of 4.07. The next highest reported criterion was the school's sports program's reputation with a mean of 4.03. An opportunity to win championships and the school's athletic conference reputation tied for third the third highest with a mean of 4.01. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with other players with a mean of 3.98. All five of the top rated criteria were related to athletics (see TABLE 4.14).

Table 4.14: Top Five Criteria for All Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	3.6%	3.6%	16.4%	34.9%	41.5%	4.07
Sports Program's Reputation	6.9%	1.5%	11.6%	41.8%	38.2%	4.03
Opportunity to Win Championships	7.3%	2.5%	12.7%	36.7%	40.7%	4.01
Athletic Conference Reputation	7.3%	2.2%	12.0%	39.6%	38.9%	4.01
Comfort with Other Players	8.0%	1.8%	10.9%	42.9%	36.4%	3.98

Table 4.15: Bottom Five Criteria for All Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	42.5%	30.5%	20.0%	5.8%	1.1%	1.92
School Alumni	40.0%	15.6%	24.0%	17.5%	2.9%	2.28
Friend's Recommendation	31.3%	21.1%	28.0%	17.5%	2.2%	2.38
College Guides and Publications	20.4%	30.2%	32.7%	14.5%	2.2%	2.48
High School Coach's Recommendation	26.2%	18.5%	26.2%	22.5%	6.5%	2.65

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by Caucasian student athletes, was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 2.65. The fourth lowest rated criterion was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.48. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.38. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.28. The lowest rated criterion for Caucasian student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 1.92. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four of the criteria were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete (see TABLE 4.15).

The following two tables reflect the responses given by all non-Caucasian student athletes. The following races, as reported by the student athletes, were represented in the non-Caucasian group: African-American, Native American, Asian-American, Latino, Pacific Islander, and those who considered themselves of mixed descent. Non-Caucasian student athletes accounted for 32.6% of the participants.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college reported by non-Caucasian student athletes was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.62. The next highest rated criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.54. The school's sports program's reputation was third highest with a mean of 4.46. Comfort with other players was fourth highest with a mean of 4.41. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with sport coaches with a mean of 4.38.

All five of the top criteria cited by non-Caucasian student athletes were related to athletics. Two of the top criteria for male student athletes had to do with athletic reputation: the sports programs and the athletic conference. Another two of the top criteria for male student athletes had to do with comfort, or fit: with the coaches and with the other players. It would seem that developing a personal relationship with others while making the college choice decision has an impact on the criteria cited as important. One criterion dealt with a winning tradition. (see TABLE 4.16).

Table 4.16: Top Five Criteria for All Non-Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.8%	.0%	4.5%	26.3%	68.4%	4.62
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.8%	5.3%	33.1%	60.9%	4.54
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.8%	7.5%	36.8%	54.9%	4.46
Comfort with Other Players	.8%	2.3%	5.3%	39.1%	52.6%	4.41
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	1.5%	10.5%	36.1%	51.9%	4.38

Table 4.17: Bottom Five Criteria for All Non-Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
School Alumni	31.6%	18.0%	29.3%	15.8%	5.3%	2.45
High School Guidance Recommendation	25.6%	20.3%	36.1%	15.0%	3.0%	2.50
Friend's Recommendation	26.3%	18.8%	34.6%	13.5%	6.8%	2.56
College Guides and Publications	12.0%	18.8%	39.1%	21.8%	8.3%	2.95
High School Coach's Recommendation	14.3%	8.3%	26.3%	37.6%	13.5%	3.28

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by non-Caucasian student athletes, was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 3.28. The fourth lowest rated criterion was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.95. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.56. Their high school guidance counselor's recommendation was second lowest with a mean of 2.50. The lowest rated criterion for non-Caucasian student athletes was school alumni with a mean of 2.45. Only one criterion was related to athletics, but four were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision (see TABLE 4.17).

There were four commonalities between races in the top five criteria: the school's sports program's reputation, an opportunity to win championships, the schools athletic conference reputation, and comfort with other players. Each group had one criterion that was not mentioned by the other group. Caucasian student athletes listed athletic facilities as their highest choice, while non- Caucasian student athletes listed comfort with sport coaches as their fifth highest.

Both Caucasian and non-Caucasian student athletes listed the same four criteria in their bottom five choices. The lowest and second lowest were reversed for the groups, but the next three were identical.

Socioeconomic Status

Socioeconomic status was ascertained from information the student athletes gave about the educational attainment of both parents. There were six possible choices for each parent: 1 – did not graduate high school, 2 – graduated high school, 3 – some college, 4 – college graduate, 5 – advanced degree, and 6 – unknown or absent. The two groups were combined and reduced to three workable groups: 1 – both parents (or one parent in a single parent household) had a high school or less education, 2 – one parent with college experience (whether single parent home or not), and 3 – both parents with college experience.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by student athletes whose parents/parent had a high school or less education, was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.39. The next highest reported criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.37. Athletic facilities was third highest with a mean of 4.30. Overall school reputation and comfort with other players tied for fourth highest with a mean of 4.09. Four of the top five criteria were related to athletics (see TABLE 4.18). This was the first time overall school reputation was mentioned in either the top or bottom five criteria. Student athletes whose parents/parent had a high school or less education accounted for 46 participants, or 11.3 percent.

Table 4.18: Top Five Criteria for All Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	6.5%	.0%	2.2%	30.4%	60.9%	4.39
Athletic Conference Reputation	6.5%	.0%	2.2%	32.6%	58.7%	4.37
Athletic Facilities	6.5%	.0%	6.5%	30.4%	56.5%	4.30
Overall School Reputation	4.3%	.0%	13.0%	47.8%	34.8%	4.09
Comfort with Other Players	6.5%	.0%	6.5%	52.2%	34.8%	4.09

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by student athletes whose parents/parent had a high school or less education, was comfort with student body with a mean of 3.17. This was the first time this criterion was mentioned. The fourth lowest criterion reported was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.67. School alumni was third lowest with a mean of 2.61. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was second lowest with a mean of 2.59. The lowest rated criterion was the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.13.

This was the first time that none of the bottom five criteria were related to athletics. With comfort with the student body mentioned in the bottom five, it could be because the student athlete does not see himself or herself as a traditional student. It may be that being a student athlete does not allow for much interaction with the general student body. Two of the criteria were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision (see TABLE 4.19).

Table 4.19: Bottom Five Criteria for All Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.0%	26.1%	28.3%	4.3%	4.3%	2.13
Friend's Recommendation	21.7%	23.9%	37.0%	8.7%	8.7%	2.59
School Alumni	30.4%	15.2%	26.1%	19.6%	8.7%	2.61
College Guides and Publications	17.4%	23.9%	39.1%	13.0%	6.5%	2.67
Comfort with Student Body	8.7%	15.2%	37.0%	28.3%	10.9%	3.17

Table 4.20 reflects the top rated responses given by student athletes who had only one parent, whether a single or two-parent parent household, attend college. This group accounted for 82 participants, or 20.1 percent.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by student athletes who had only one parent who attended college, was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.44. The next highest reported criterion was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.40. Athletic facilities was third highest with a mean of 4.33. The school's sports program's reputation was fourth highest with a mean of 4.30. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with other players with a mean of 4.29. All five of the top criteria were related to athletics. Two of the top criteria for student athletes who had only one parent who attended college had to do with athletic reputation: the sports programs and the athletic conference. One criterion dealt with a winning tradition. Another criterion dealt with the quality of athletic structures.

Table 4.20: Top Five Criteria for All Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Conference Reputation	1.2%	.0%	8.5%	34.1%	56.1%	4.44
Opportunity to Win Championships	2.4%	1.2%	7.3%	31.7%	57.3%	4.40
Athletic Facilities	2.4%	3.7%	4.9%	36.6%	52.4%	4.33
Sports Program's Reputation	2.4%	1.2%	9.8%	36.6%	50.0%	4.30
Comfort with Other Players	3.7%	1.2%	9.8%	32.9%	52.4%	4.29

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by student athletes who had only one parent who attended college, was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 3.02. College guides and publications was fourth lowest with a mean of 2.70. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.35. School alumni was also third lowest with a mean of 2.35. The lowest rated criterion for student athletes who had only one parent who attended college was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.20.

Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four of the criteria were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete. Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni could be personal or only known in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation (see TABLE 4.21).

Table 4.21: Bottom Five Criteria for All Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	36.6%	24.4%	24.4%	12.2%	2.4%	2.20
Friend's Recommendation	31.7%	20.7%	29.3%	17.1%	1.2%	2.35
School Alumni	35.4%	14.6%	32.9%	13.4%	3.7%	2.35
College Guides and Publications	17.1%	18.3%	46.3%	14.6%	3.7%	2.70
High School Coach's Recommendation	19.5%	9.8%	29.3%	31.7%	9.8%	3.02

The top rated criterion of student athletes who had both parents attend college was the school's sports program's reputation with a mean of 4.15. The next highest was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.12. Athletic facilities was third highest with a mean of 4.10. Comfort with other players and the school's athletic conference reputation tied for fourth highest with a mean of 4.07. Student athletes who had both parents attend college were the largest socioeconomic group with 280, or 68.6 percent of the participants (see Table 4.22).

All five of the top criteria were related to athletics. Two of the top criteria for student athletes who had both parents attend college had to do with athletic reputation: the sports program and the athletic conference. One criterion dealt with a winning tradition of the sports program. Another criterion dealt with the quality of athletic structures. The fifth criterion in the top five dealt with close relationships with other players.

Table 4.22: Top Five Criteria for All Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Sports Program's Reputation	5.0%	1.4%	10.4%	40.0%	43.2%	4.15
Opportunity to Win Championships	5.7%	2.1%	12.1%	34.3%	45.7%	4.12
Athletic Facilities	1.8%	3.6%	16.8%	38.9%	38.9%	4.10
Comfort with Other Players	6.1%	2.5%	9.3%	42.5%	39.6%	4.07
Athletic Conference Reputation	5.7%	2.5%	11.4%	39.3%	41.1%	4.07

The fifth lowest rated criterion for student athletes who had both parents attend college was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 2.74. The fourth lowest criterion was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.61. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.44. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.28. The lowest rated criterion for this group was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.08 (see TABLE 4.23).

Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision. Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni relationships could be personal or only known in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual to individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation.

Table 4.23: Bottom Five Criteria for All Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.1%	28.2%	25.0%	8.6%	1.1%	2.08
School Alumni	38.9%	17.1%	23.6%	17.5%	2.9%	2.28
Friend's Recommendation	30.4%	19.6%	29.3%	17.1%	3.6%	2.44
College Guides and Publications	17.9%	29.3%	30.7%	18.2%	3.9%	2.61
High School Coach's Recommendation	23.9%	17.5%	26.8%	24.3%	7.5%	2.74

There were four commonalities in the top five among the three socioeconomic groups: the school's athletic conference reputation, an opportunity to win championships, athletic facilities, and comfort with other players. Only one criterion was mentioned by a single group. Student athletes who had both parents, or one parent in a single parent home, with a high school degree or less, listed the overall school reputation. Student athletes who had one, or both, parents with college experience listed the same criteria in their top five but in different order.

Once again there were four commonalities in the bottom five choices. The student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation was the lowest rated criterion for all three groups. The other three criteria were their friend's recommendation, school alumni, and college guides and publications. Once again the group of student athletes whose parents, or parent in a single family home, had one criterion not mentioned by the other groups: comfort with student body.

Scholarship Level

Scholarship level consisted of three categories: full scholarship, partial scholarship, and non-scholarship. Full scholarship student athletes accounted for 38.2 percent of the participants. All sports had at least some of their student athletes on full scholarship. Revenue producing sports, which operate in the black, had a higher percentage of these. Obviously, sports that had a high number of participants (i.e. football) had more full scholarship student athletes than other sports.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by full-scholarship student athletes, was an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 4.63. The next highest reported criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 4.53. Athletic facilities was third highest with a mean of 4.49. The school's sports program's reputation was fourth highest with a mean of 4.48. The fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with sport coaches with a mean of 4.43. All five of the top criteria were related to athletics (see TABLE 4.24).

Table 4.24: Top Five Criteria for All Full-Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	3.8%	28.8%	67.3%	4.63
Athletic Conference Reputation	.6%	.0%	5.1%	34.0%	60.3%	4.53
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.6%	6.4%	35.9%	57.1%	4.49
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	6.4%	39.1%	54.5%	4.48
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.6%	9.0%	37.2%	53.2%	4.43

Table 4.25: Bottom Five Criteria for All Full-Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	30.8%	22.4%	34.0%	8.3%	4.5%	2.33
School Alumni	35.9%	12.8%	31.4%	13.5%	6.4%	2.42
Friend's Recommendation	26.9%	18.6%	34.6%	13.5%	6.4%	2.54
College Guides and Publications	14.1%	22.4%	38.5%	19.2%	5.8%	2.80
High School Coach's Recommendation	14.1%	12.2%	25.0%	36.5%	12.2%	3.21

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by full-scholarship student athletes, was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 3.21. The fourth lowest criterion reported was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.80. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.54. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.42. The lowest rated criterion for full-scholarship student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.33.

Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision. Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni relationships again could be personal or only in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual to individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation (see TABLE 4.25).

Partial scholarship student athletes accounted for 36 percent of the participants. Most sports had student athletes on partial scholarship. It is important to note that some sports (mostly those that operate in the red) rely heavily on partial scholarships and give out very few full scholarships.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by partial scholarship student athletes, was athletic facilities with a mean of 4.07. The next two highest reported criteria were comfort with other players and the school's sports program's reputation, both with a mean of 4.01. Comfort with sport coaches was fourth highest with a mean of 4.00. The fifth highest rated criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation with a mean of 3.98 (see TABLE 4.26).

All five of the top criteria again were related to athletics. The top criterion dealt with the quality of athletic structures. Two of the top criteria for male student athletes had to do with athletic reputation: the sports programs and the athletic conference. Two criteria in the top five dealt with relationships: with coaches and with other players.

Table 4.26: Top Five Criteria for All Partial Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	2.7%	4.1%	17.0%	36.1%	40.1%	4.07
Comfort with Other Players	8.2%	2.0%	10.2%	39.5%	40.1%	4.01
Sports Program's Reputation	6.8%	1.4%	11.6%	44.2%	36.1%	4.01
Comfort with Sport Coaches	7.5%	2.7%	17.0%	27.9%	44.9%	4.00
Athletic Conference Reputation	8.2%	2.0%	13.6%	36.1%	40.1%	3.98

The fifth lowest rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by partial scholarship student athletes, was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.54. The fourth lowest criterion reported was television exposure with a mean of 2.44. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.32. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.29. The lowest rated criterion for partial scholarship student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 1.95. This was the first time television exposure was mentioned.

Only one criterion was related to athletics, but three of the criteria were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete (see TABLE 4.27). One of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend's recommendation. School alumni relationships could be personal or only known in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual to individual. Television exposure was the only criterion in the bottom five that was related to athletics.

Table 4.27: Bottom Five Criteria for All Partial Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	40.1%	32.7%	19.7%	7.5%	.0%	1.95
School Alumni	38.8%	19.7%	19.0%	19.0%	3.4%	2.29
Friend's Recommendation	34.7%	19.0%	27.2%	17.7%	1.4%	2.32
Television Exposure	29.3%	19.0%	34.7%	12.9%	4.1%	2.44
College Guides and Publications	19.0%	29.9%	32.0%	15.6%	3.4%	2.54

Non-scholarship student athletes accounted for 25.7 percent of the participants. Every sport had student athletes that were not on athletic scholarship. Some student athletes were trying to earn scholarships at a later date, and some were on academic scholarships.

The top rated criterion in selecting a college reported by non-scholarship student athletes was having an opportunity to win championships with a mean of 3.98. The next highest reported criterion was school location with a mean of 3.96. The school's athletic conference reputation was third highest with a mean of 3.94. The school's sports program's reputation was fourth highest with a mean of 3.92. The fifth highest rated criterion was related to the overall school reputation with a mean of 3.90. This was the first time school location was mentioned (see TABLE 4.28).

Four of the top five criteria were related to athletics. The top criterion dealt with a winning tradition of the sports program. Three of the top criteria had to do with reputation: the sports programs, the athletic conference, and the school.

Table 4.28: Top Five Criteria for All Non-Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	8.6%	3.8%	12.4%	31.4%	43.8%	3.98
School Location	1.9%	2.9%	20.0%	47.6%	27.6%	3.96
Athletic Conference Reputation	6.7%	3.8%	11.4%	44.8%	33.3%	3.94
Sports Program's Reputation	8.6%	2.9%	14.3%	36.2%	38.1%	3.92
Overall School Reputation	1.9%	2.9%	21.9%	49.5%	23.8%	3.90

Table 4.29 shows the lowest rated criteria in selecting a college by non-scholarship student athletes. The fifth lowest rated criterion was their high school coach's recommendation with a mean of 3.21. The fourth lowest criterion reported was college guides and publications with a mean of 2.80. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest with a mean of 2.54. School alumni was second lowest with a mean of 2.42. The lowest rated criterion for non-scholarship student athletes was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation with a mean of 2.33. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, but four were related to the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision of the student athlete.

Two of the criteria related to relationships would seem to be personal by nature: the friend and the high school coach. School alumni relationships again could be personal or only in passing. The high school guidance counselor relationship could vary from individual to individual. Only one criterion in the bottom five was related to athletics, the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation.

Table 4.29: Bottom Five Criteria for All Non-Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
High School Guidance Recommendation	30.8%	22.4%	34.0%	8.3%	4.5%	2.33
School Alumni	35.9%	12.8%	31.4%	13.5%	6.4%	2.42
Friend's Recommendation	26.9%	18.6%	34.6%	13.5%	6.4%	2.54
College Guides and Publications	14.1%	22.4%	38.5%	19.2%	5.8%	2.80
High School Coach's Recommendation	14.1%	12.2%	25.0%	36.5%	12.2%	3.21

There were two commonalities in the top five among the three groups of student athletes in regard to scholarship level. Both criteria dealt with reputation, the school's athletic conference and its sports programs. Both full scholarship and non-scholarship student athletes listed an opportunity to win championships as their top criteria. Full scholarship and partial scholarship student athletes listed athletic facilities and comfort with sport coaches. Partial scholarship student athletes were the only group to mention comfort with other players. Non-scholarship student athletes were the only group to mention either school location or the overall school reputation.

Almost all the criteria in the bottom five were identical for each group. Each group listed their high school guidance counselor's recommendation as their lowest rated criterion. School alumni was second lowest and the student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest. Whereas partial scholarship student athletes listed college guides and publications as their fifth lowest criterion, full scholarship and non-scholarship student athletes listed it as fourth lowest. Both full scholarship and non-scholarship student athletes listed their high school coach's recommendation as their fifth lowest criterion, while partial scholarship student athletes did not list it at all. This group listed television exposure as fourth lowest.

Sport

All sixteen sports were represented in the study. There were seven men's sports and nine women's sports.

Table 4.30 shows the 18 different criteria represented in the top five criteria for all sports. Some sports listed more than five criteria due to a tie in their mean score. Some criteria were only mentioned once. Some criteria were mentioned by most groups. No criteria was mentioned by every group.

Of the 18 different criteria listed in the top five by the sixteen sports, five criteria were listed by ten or more groups. Comfort with other players was mentioned by ten of the sports with half of the sports listing it as their top choice. Eleven sports listed athletic facilities in their top five. Having an opportunity to win championships was also mentioned by eleven sports with almost all of them listing it as their first or second choice. The school's athletic conference reputation and its sports program's reputation were mentioned by twelve sports. This cluster of criteria all were sport specific and represented a majority of the sports.

Several criteria were only mentioned once: the overall school reputation, the school's academic reputation, specific academic programs, parent's wishes, and financial aid. None of these criteria were related to athletics. These criteria are included as top criteria in studies of traditional students. Four other criteria were mentioned by only two sports: school location, athletic schedule strength, potential to play professionally, and television exposure. School location was the only criterion that was not related to athletics. Of these nine top criteria that were mentioned only once or twice, six were mentioned by other sports in their bottom five. As to the responses, women's rowing had the most distinctive criteria. Three of their criteria were only listed by them. A fourth criterion was listed by only one other sport.

Table 4.30: Sports Rank Top Five

	Men's Sports Rank							Women's Sports Rank								
	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Basketball	Golf	Rowing	Soccer	Softball	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Volleyball
Overall School Reputation										4						
School's Academic Reputation										3						
School Location										1			5			
Specific Academic Programs										2						
Parent's Wishes																5
Financial Aid									4							
Athletic Facilities	4		5	1			4		1	5	5	5		1	5	2
Comfort with Sport Coaches		2			4	3	5	2				4	3		3	
Comfort with Other Players		5			1	3		1	4		1	2	2		1	1
Sports Program's Reputation	5		3	5	2	1	1		2		2	5	5	2		3
Opportunity to Win Championships	2		1	1		1	2	4	2		2	1		2		3
Athletic Conference Reputation	1	5	2	1	5	5	3	4			2	3		2	4	
Athletic Schedule Strength						5								2		
Potential to Play Professionally	3			1												
College Head Coach					2	5		2	2				1		5	
Chance to Travel with Team		3											4		2	5
Team's Won/Loss Record		4				5		4								5
Television Exposure		1	4													

Table 4.31 shows the 13 different criteria represented in the bottom five criteria for all sports. Some sports listed more than five criteria due to a tie in mean scores. Some criteria were only mentioned once, while some criteria were mentioned by almost all groups.

Of the 13 different criteria listed in the bottom five by the various sports, four criteria were mentioned by a majority of the groups. College guides and publications was mentioned by thirteen of the sports. Almost the same thirteen sports mentioned their friend's recommendation. Fifteen of the sixteen sports mentioned their high school guidance counselor's recommendation. Almost half of these listed this criterion as their lowest rated criteria. Fifteen sports also mentioned school alumni in their bottom five. None of these criteria were related to athletics.

Five of the criteria were mentioned by only one sport. The overall school reputation received one mention in the bottom five by men's basketball, but was in the top five for women's rowing. The school's academic reputation and specific academic programs received only one mention in the bottom five by men's tennis, but was in the top five for women's rowing. Financial aid was in the bottom five criteria for men's tennis as well, but was in the top five criteria for women's golf. Women's rowing was the only sport to mention their team's won/loss record in their bottom five criteria, but it was in the top five for several teams. It was also the only criterion related to athletics in the bottom five.

Women's basketball and women's golf were the only sports to list school size in their bottom five. No other criterion was mentioned by less than five sports mention.

Table 4.31: Sport Rank Bottom Five

	Men's Sports Rank							Women's Sports Rank								
	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Basketball	Golf	Rowing	Soccer	Softball	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Volleyball
School Size								5	5							
Overall School Reputation		5														
School's Academic Reputation						4										
Specific Academic Programs						1										
College Guides and Publications	2	1	4	3	4	5	4	4			4	4		5	4	3
High School Guidance Recommendation	1	4	1	2	1		4	2	3	4	1	1	3	1	1	2
Friend's Recommendation	4	3	3	4		5	3	3			3	3	5	3	3	4
School Alumni	3	2	2	5	5	3	2	1	1		2	2	4	1	2	1
Financial Aid						2										
High School Coach's Recommendation	5		5	1					2	3	5			4		
Potential to Play Professionally					3					2		5	2			5
Team's Won/Loss Record										5						
Television Exposure					2	5	5		4	1			1		5	

While the previous information dealt with college choice criteria by sport, it is important to know how the different categories (race, scholarship level, parental education level) responded to the college choice criteria within specific sports. Football was chosen as the sport to reflect this information due to the number of their participants. Even though football did not have any partial scholarship student athletes, the other categories were balanced enough to make an observation. The other sports in this study did not have enough participants to accurately reflect a reporting of the data. The small number of some sports left multiple criteria tied throughout a discussion of the top five and bottom five criteria. Some sports did not have enough participants classified in certain categories to warrant an examination of their responses. Some sports had very few full scholarship student athletes due to NCAA limitations, while other sports had categories that were overly represented by one race or parental education level.

There were three common criteria in the top five within the subgroups for football: an opportunity to win championships, the sports program's reputation, and the school's athletic conference reputation. Having an opportunity to win championships was the top criterion for each subgroup. Three groups listed athletic facilities, potential to play professionally, and television exposure. Two groups listed overall school reputation and comfort with sport coaches. Only one group listed the team's won/loss record.

Non-Caucasian student athletes selected the same criteria as full scholarship student athletes, as well as student athletes whose parents had a high school education or less. Student athletes that were Caucasian, non-scholarship, had one parent with college experience, or had both parents with college experience had almost the same criteria in common with one or two variations (see TABLE 4.32).

Table 4.32 Top Five Criteria by Mean and Rank for Football and Category

	Race		Scholarship Level		Parental Education		
	Non-Caucasian	Caucasian	Full	Non-scholarship	Parents with high school or less	One parent with college	Both parents with college
	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank
Overall School Reputation				4.14 - 5			4.34 - 4
Athletic Facilities		4.35 - 4				4.52 - 4	4.32 - 5
Comfort with Sport Coaches		4.24 - 5		4.19 - 4			
Sports Program's Reputation	4.58 - 3	4.38 - 3	4.56 - 5	4.33 - 2	4.50 - 5	4.57 - 3	4.48 - 2
Opportunity to Win Championships	4.85 - 1	4.74 - 1	4.86 - 1	4.62 - 1	4.85 - 1	4.91 - 1	4.74 - 1
Athletic Conference Reputation	4.61 - 2	4.56 - 2	4.67 - 2	4.33 - 2	4.70 - 3	4.78 - 2	4.46 - 3
Potential to Play Professionally	4.58 - 3		4.60 - 3		4.60 - 4		
Team's Won/Loss Record						4.52 - 4	
Television Exposure	4.56 - 5		4.57 - 4		4.75 - 2		

There were four common criteria in the bottom five within the subgroups for football: college guides and publications, the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation, their friend recommendation, and school alumni. The student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation was the bottom choice for all subgroups. Three of the four common criteria were related to relationships. Four groups listed their high school coach's recommendation in the bottom five, while two groups listed comfort with the student body. Non-Caucasian student athletes selected the same bottom five criteria as full scholarship student athletes, as well as student athletes whose parents had a high school education or less, and student athletes who had both parents with college experience (see TABLE 4.33).

Table 4.33 Bottom Five Criteria by Mean and Rank for Football and Category

	Race		Scholarship Level		Parental Education		
	Non-Caucasian	Caucasian	Full	Non-scholarship	Parents with high school or less	One parent with college	Both parents with college
	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank	ξ- Rank
Specific Academic Programs						3.35 - 5	
College Guides and Publications	2.86 - 4	2.35 - 2	2.74 - 4	2.48 - 4	2.63 - 4	2.70 - 4	2.58 - 4
High School Guidance Recommendation	2.19 - 1	1.50 - 1	2.10 - 1	1.38 - 1	1.75 - 1	2.20 - 1	1.84 - 1
Friend's Recommendation	2.39 - 3	2.35 - 2	2.38 - 3	2.38 - 3	2.06 - 2	2.35 - 2	2.44 - 3
School Alumni	2.29 - 2	2.35 - 2	2.35 - 2	2.19 - 2	2.31 - 3	2.50 - 3	2.22 - 2
Comfort with Student Body		3.06 - 5			2.88 - 5		
Financial Aid				2.52 - 5			
High School Coach's Recommendation	2.95 - 5		3.06 - 5		2.88 - 5		2.84 - 5

Research Question #3

Do the criteria reported by the student athletes differ from the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice?

Through a review on the literature of college choice, for both student athletes and traditional students, several criteria came to the forefront. These criteria were listed as most important in making college choice decisions. These criteria were found to be overall school reputation, academic reputation, academic programs, school location, school size, and college head coach. The student athletes in this study, for the most part, did not rank these criteria as important in the college choice process.

Most of the research on college choice decisions focuses on traditional students. Several of the criteria traditional students used when selecting a college were listed with great frequency in the studies that dealt with college choice decisions of traditional students. Specific academic programs and the school's academic reputation were listed by most studies as the top criteria in the college choice decision [Holland and Richards (1958), Welki and Navratil (1987), Paulsen (1990), Blinn College (1994), Espinoza (2002), and Hoyt and Brown (2003)].

This study found that student athletes at the University of Tennessee did not rate criteria relating to academic programs and reputation as high as other studies on college choice. Both of these criteria fell somewhere in the middle of the 27 criteria for all student athletes. Academic criteria were ranked higher by females and student athletes who had both parents attend college. Women's rowing was the only sport to list both academic programs and academic reputation in their top five. Males and non-Caucasian student athletes ranked the academic criteria lower than their counterparts. Men's tennis was the only sport to rank both academic programs and academic reputation in their bottom five criteria.

The overall school reputation was the top criterion listed by several studies on college choice [Holland and Richards (1958), Paulsen (1990), Blinn College (1994), Espinoza (2002), and Hoyt and Brown (2003)]. This study found that school reputation was consistently listed among the top ten criteria except in a couple of individual sports. Women's rowing had it in their top five, while men's basketball had it in their bottom five.

School location was a fourth criterion that was listed among the top criteria in the review of literature [Welki and Navratil (1987), Paulsen (1990), and Hoyt and Brown (2003)]. The student athletes in this study did not rank this criterion as high. School location was ranked in the middle of the 27 criteria for the student athletes in this study. The only exception was that women's rowing listed school location as their highest rated criteria.

School size was another criteria listed among the top criteria in the review of literature on the subject by Paulsen (1990) and Blinn College (1994). This criterion was consistently lowly ranked by the student athletes in this study. School size was rated higher though for females and Caucasians.

Holland and Richards (1958) and Gabert, Hale, and Montalvo (1999) found that male and female responses tend to be identical. This study found the same. Three of the top five criteria, and four of the bottom five criteria, were the same for both male and female student athletes.

A 1981 NCAA survey of 2,116 college football players found that aspects of the athletic program were more important in college choice than academic issues. The school's sports program's reputation was the top rated criterion. Mathes and Gurney (1985) also listed this criterion. The student athletes in this study consistently ranked this criterion high. The school's sports program's reputation was in the top five for 12 sports and was the top choice for student athletes who had both parents who attended college.

The NCAA study, along with Mathes and Gurney (1985) and Gabert, Hale, and Montalvo (1999), also listed the student athlete's college head coach as a top ranked criterion. This criterion was not as high for the student athletes in this study. Although the

head coach criteria consistently averaged a top ten ranking, six groups had it in their top five. The group that ranked head coach the lowest was non-scholarship student athletes.

Mathes and Gurney (1985) found that student athletes ranked the overall school reputation as a top criteria. It was also listed by most studies with traditional students as a top criterion in college choice. This study found that the school reputation criterion was consistently listed among the top ten criteria except for a couple of individual sports. Women's rowing had it in their top five, while men's basketball had it in their bottom five.

School location was another criterion that was listed by most studies with traditional students as a top criterion in college choice. It was also listed by a study of student athletes by Gabert et al (1999). The student athletes in this study did not rank the school location criterion as high. It was ranked in the middle of the 27 criteria for the student athletes in this study. The only exception was that women's rowing listed school location as their highest rated criterion.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

Student athletes, as a sub-group, have seldom been included in the research on college choice decisions. A major concern is that a significant group of students, such as student athletes, have never been identified based on the criteria they use in making their college choice decisions. What were the criteria used by student athletes in selecting their school of choice? Were there similarities or differences in the criteria used based on demographic categories such as gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in? Were the criteria student athletes used in making this decision similar to the data on general student populations?

This research used a cross-sectional survey research design to study college choice decisions of student athletes at the University of Tennessee. The University had approximately 450 student athletes (454 listed on roster as of January 2004) competing in 16 sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, football, men's and women's golf, men's and women's track and field (indoor, outdoor, and cross country), women's soccer, women's softball, men's and women's swimming and diving, men's and women's tennis, women's volleyball and women's rowing. These athletes were either on full scholarship, partial scholarship (any athletic grant-in-aid that did not cover all costs), or were considered non-scholarship (no athletic grant-in-aid of any kind).

The questionnaire used five demographic categories (sport played, race, gender, parents educational level, and scholarship level). The student athletes were also asked to rank on a Likert-type scale a list of twenty-seven criteria for college choice selection.

The first twelve criteria on the questionnaire reflected common criteria students tend to consider when choosing a college. The additional criteria (questions thirteen through twenty-seven) were added by the researcher in response to the distinctive nature of college athletics and of the culture in which college student athletes reside.

The questionnaires were administered to traditional-age full-time student athletes who were registered for the spring semester of 2004 while the student athletes were in their required team meetings. A response rate of 80% was hoped for, but 90% (408) was attained.

To determine what criteria student athletes reported as being most important in their college choice decision in this population study, simple percentages were used. A mean for each question was also calculated and ranked to give each sub-group a basis for comparison. To determine if the criteria student athletes reported differed from the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice, a simple comparison with the literature on the subject of college choice was used.

For each research question, criteria were rank ordered by mean. It was from the resulting tables that a discussion of the top five and bottom five criteria was developed.

It is important to realize that the findings of this study are for student athletes at only one institution. Since this was a population study of student athletes at the University of Tennessee, the findings cannot be generalized to all student athletes.

Research Question #1

The first research question asked, "What criteria do student athletes report as being most and least important in their college choice decision?"

Student Athlete Findings

This study found that the top rated criteria in selecting a college for student athletes at the University of Tennessee were all sport specific. The top criterion was having an opportunity to win championships. The next highest reported criterion was the school's athletic conference reputation. Athletic facilities and the school's sports program's reputation tied for third highest, while the fifth highest rated criterion was comfort with other players.

This study also found that four of the lowest rated criteria, used in selecting a college, were related to people and their lack of influence on the student athlete's decision on college choice. The fifth lowest rated criterion was the student athlete's high school coach's recommendation. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was third lowest. School alumni was second lowest, while the lowest rated criterion was the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation.

Research Question #2

The second research question asked, "Do the criteria student athletes report as being most and least important in their college choice decision differ by gender, race, socioeconomic status, scholarship level, or sport participated in?"

Findings for Gender

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by gender. Male and female student athletes at the University of Tennessee selected similar criteria. Almost all of the top criteria for both groups were related to athletics. There were

three commonalities between the genders in the top five criteria: The school's sports program's reputation, athletic facilities, and comfort with sport coaches. The top rated criteria in selecting a college, reported by female student athletes, was comfort with other players. The top rated criterion in selecting a college, reported by male student athletes, was an opportunity to win championships. Four of the top five criteria were related to athletics.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria, used in selecting a college by both male and female student athletes, were similar as well. The lowest rated criteria had to do with other people's influence on the college choice decision. Both groups had the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation, school alumni, and their friend's recommendation first, second, and third respectively. Male student athletes also listed their high school coach's recommendation.

Findings for Race

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by race. The top rated criteria in selecting a college, for both Caucasian and Non-Caucasian student athletes at the University of Tennessee, were all sport specific. There were four commonalities between races in top five criteria: the school's sports program's reputation, an opportunity to win championships, the schools athletic conference reputation, and comfort with other players. Each group had only one criterion that was not mentioned by the other group. Caucasian student athletes listed athletic facilities as their highest choice, while non- Caucasian student athletes listed comfort with sport coaches.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria, used in selecting a college by both Caucasian and Non-Caucasian student athletes, were similar as well. The lowest rated criteria had to do with other people's influence on the college choice decision. The lowest rated criteria for Caucasians was their high school guidance counselor's recommendation. School alumni was second lowest for Caucasians while it was the lowest rated criterion for non-Caucasians. Other low rated criteria in selecting a college, reported by both races, were their high school coach's recommendation and their friend's recommendation.

Findings for Socioeconomic Status

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by socioeconomic status. The top rated criteria in selecting a college, for all three socioeconomic levels of student athletes at the University of Tennessee, were athletic related. There were four commonalities in the top five among the three socio-economic groups: the school's athletic conference reputation, an opportunity to win championships, athletic facilities, and comfort with other players.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria, used in selecting a college by all three levels of socioeconomic status, were similar as well. The lowest rated criteria had to do with other people's lack of influence on their college choice decision. The student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation was the lowest rated criterion for all three groups. Other criteria rated lowly were the student athlete's friend's recommendation and school alumni.

Findings for Scholarship Level

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by scholarship level. The top rated criteria in selecting a college for all three scholarship levels of student athletes at the University of Tennessee were related to athletics. There were two commonalities in the top five among the three groups: the school's athletic conference reputation and its sports program's reputation. Both full scholarship and non-scholarship student athletes listed an opportunity to win championships as their top criterion. Full scholarship and partial scholarship student athletes listed athletic facilities and comfort with sport coaches.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria used in selecting a college by all three scholarship levels were similar as well. The lowest rated criteria had to do with other people's lack of influence on the student athlete's college choice decision. Each group listed their high school guidance counselor's recommendation as their lowest rated criterion. School alumni and the student athlete's friend's recommendation were the next lowest. Both full scholarship and non-scholarship student athletes listed their high school coach's recommendation in the bottom five.

Findings for Sport

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by sport. Of the 18 different criteria listed in the top five by the sixteen sports, five criteria were listed by ten or more groups. This cluster of criteria all were sport specific and represented a majority of the sports. Comfort with other players was mentioned by ten of the sports with half of them listing it as their top choice. Eleven sports listed athletic

facilities in their top five. Having an opportunity to win championships was also mentioned by eleven sports with almost all of them listing it as their first or second choice. The school's athletic conference reputation and the school's sports program's reputation were both mentioned by twelve sports as highly rated criteria.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria used in selecting a college did not differ by sport. Of the 13 different criteria listed in the bottom five by the various sports, four criteria were mentioned by a majority of the groups. A majority of the sports mentioned other people's lack of influence on the student athlete's college choice decision. Fifteen of the sixteen sports mentioned their high school guidance counselor's recommendation and almost half of these listed it as their lowest rated criteria. Fifteen sports also mentioned school alumni in their bottom five criteria. Thirteen sports mentioned their friend's recommendation. Almost the same thirteen sports listed college guides and publications.

This study found that the criteria football players used in selecting a college did not differ by category. The top rated criteria in selecting a college for football players at the University of Tennessee, with subcategories of race, scholarship level, and parental education level, were all sport specific. There were three common criteria in the top five within the subgroups for football: an opportunity to win championships, the sports program's reputation, and the school's athletic conference reputation. Having an opportunity to win championships was the top criterion for each subgroup.

This study also found that the lowest rated criteria football players used in selecting a college did not differ by category. The lowest rated criteria in selecting a college for football players at the University of Tennessee, with subcategories of race,

scholarship level, and parental education level, dealt with other people's lack of influence on the student athlete's college choice decision. The student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation was the bottom choice for all subgroups. There were three other common athletic related criteria in the bottom five within the subcategories for football: their high school guidance counselor's recommendation, their friend recommendation, and school alumni. Four categories listed their high school coach's recommendation in their bottom five.

Research Question #3

The third research question asked, "Do the criteria reported by the student athletes differ from the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice?"

Findings from the Literature

This study found that the criteria used in selecting a college for University of Tennessee student athletes differed somewhat from the criteria used by general student populations and other student athletes. Through a review on the literature of college choice criteria, several criteria were listed as top choices in studies for either traditional students or student athletes. These criteria were found to be overall school reputation, academic programs, academic reputation, school location, school size, and college head coach.

Specific academic programs, the university's academic reputation, the overall school reputation, school size, and school location were some of the most cited college

choice criteria in studies of traditional students. This study found that student athletes at the University of Tennessee did not rate these criteria as high. It seemed that if a criteria was related to athletics, it was not rated high.

In the studies that that dealt specifically with the subject of college choice by student athletes, it was found that aspects of the athletic program were more important in college choice than academic issues. The school's sports program's reputation was a top rated criterion, and the student athletes in this study consistently ranked it high. The student athlete's college head coach was another highly ranked criterion in studies of student athletes. The student athletes in this study did not list this criterion as high as other student athletes in similar studies.

The criteria listed by the student athletes in this study were somewhat similar to the criteria identified by general student populations in the literature on college choice, though not as highly ranked. For the most part, if a criterion was not related to athletics, it was ranked low.

It was also found, in the review of literature, that male and female responses tend to be identical. This study found the same. Three of the top five criteria, all related to athletics, were the same for males and females: the school's sports program's reputation, athletic facilities, and comfort with sport coaches. Four of the bottom five criteria were the same for both genders: the student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation, school alumni, their friend's recommendation and college guides and publications. Three of the bottom five criteria had to do with the lack of influence other people had on the college choice decision.

Conclusions

1. Student athletes at the University of Tennessee care not only about the school's overall reputation but also particularly about its sports related reputation.

This study found that the overall school reputation was consistently listed among the top ten criteria except for a couple of individual sports. Student athletes at the University of Tennessee do seem to care about the institution they attend. The image of the university is important to the student athletes. Attending college is not enough to the student athletes, attending a college that is highly regarded to them is of more importance.

The student athletes in this study consistently ranked the school's sports program's reputation high. This criterion was in the top five for 12 sports and was the top choice for student athletes who had both parents who attended college. This indicates that the perception of being part of a successful athletic tradition is important.

The student athletes in this study consistently ranked the school's athletic conference reputation high. This shows that being part of a highly regarded athletic conference is important to the student athletes in this study.

2. Championships are important to student athletes at the University of Tennessee.

Winning championships was the highest rated criterion for the student athletes in this study. This shows that the student athletes seem to care about athletic success. Just

being part of the school's athletic team is not enough for the student athletes in this study; they seem to care about the team being highly successful.

3. The quality of athletic facilities is important to student athletes at the University of Tennessee.

The belief of spending money to build and improve athletic amenities that will, in turn, recruit the most sought-after student athletes is justified. Until now the idea of spending money to create athletic success was just an assumption. Institutions that seem to believe that athletic success comes from increased spending for athletic facilities may be right in their assumptions. Though spending money does not guarantee athletic success, it seems that it will attract athletes if spent on facilities.

4. Other people had little influence on the college choice decision of University of Tennessee student athletes.

Even though there may be an established relationship with the student athlete, the decision on what college to attend is not effected by other people. The student athlete's friend's recommendation was consistently ranked low. The student athlete's high school guidance counselor's recommendation was the lowest rated criterion by the student athletes and at or near the bottom for all sub-groups of student athletes. The guidance counselors may give information to the student athlete to help in the decision making process, but they seem to have little influence on the decision itself. The student athlete's high school coach's recommendation was generally ranked near the bottom of the criteria student athletes used in making their college choice decision. This goes against the

common belief of many people involved in the recruiting process that the way to a recruit is through his, or her, high school coach. Though this route may be a way to make first contact with a prospective student athlete, it does not seem to effect the college choice decision. These criteria are examples of the lack of influence by those people who deal with the student athletes on a regular basis.

The student athletes also ranked the criterion about school alumni consistently low. This shows that even those people who do not have a personal relationship with the student athlete, even though the student athlete may be aware of them or know them, does not influence their college choice decision.

5. Student athletes at the University of Tennessee chose athletic related criteria over the criteria traditional students tend to choose in college choice studies.

The student athletes in this study consistently chose athletic related criteria over academic and institutional related criteria. Criteria such as winning championships, athletic facilities, and the sports program's reputation were cited with great frequency, and ranked high. This shows that the nature of big time college athletics attracts a different sort of student. While they may be student athletes, they tend to see themselves as athletes first.

Comfort with other players was also mentioned in the top five criteria. This seems to show that these student athletes want to be around others who understand what being part of an athletic program is all about.

Recommendations to the Field

1. The findings of this study could be adapted to current recruiting methods at the University of Tennessee. The findings of this study show what criteria student athletes used when making their college choice decision. Athletic departments should take notice of what criteria current student athletes used when making their college choice decision and use this information to their advantage in recruiting prospective student athletes. Understanding what a prospective athletic recruit deems important would allow the university's athletic teams to adjust their recruiting efforts to meet the needs and desires of those prospective recruits. This would also allow for a more personalized approach to the recruiting process. Although caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings of this study in light of the results coming from only one institution, individuals responsible for the recruitment of intercollegiate student-athletes should begin to gain a better understanding of the relationship between athletic and non-athletic factors in the college choice process. With scholarship numbers now being tied to graduation rates, athletic departments should attempt to mesh the needs and wants of potential student athletes with an environment that will allow the student athlete to succeed both in athletics and academics.

2. Recruiting strategies need to be tailored to meet the needs of female student athletes. The results from this study generally suggest that those factors that matter most to male athletes also matter greatly to female athletes. While there are some subtle differences, this would seem to indicate that the recruitment of female student athletes could be similar in scope to that of male student athletes. This would mostly be the case

with non-revenue producing sports such as golf, tennis, and swimming. If athletic departments could streamline the recruiting process, this would not only save money but also meet the needs of prospective student athletes. Title IX has dramatically changed the number of women in college athletics, as well as what sports are offered, and the recruitment of female athletes is undergoing an incredible transition. Recruiting strategies need to follow suit.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following recommendations for further inquiry are suggested:

1. Since this study was conducted at only one institution, it is suggested that a study of this nature be conducted at other institutions. It would be beneficial to know if the results of this study reflect the beliefs of student athletes at other institutions. The research could be performed at other Southeastern Conference universities, as well as other NCAA division 1-A institutions. The research could also be carried out at division 1-AA, division 3, and NAIA levels. It would be interesting to know if the criteria student athletes at the University of Tennessee used in their college choice decision was similar to student athletes at other institutions.
2. This study could be expanded to give the results of student athletes in dual groups (i.e. race/gender, race/sport played, race/socio-economic level, race/scholarship level, etc), or multiple sub-groups (race/gender/sport played, race/gender/sport played/scholarship level, etc). This study only reflected the results of student athletes at the University of Tennessee in general, and the results of sub-groups of those student

athletes. It would be important to know the interaction of those sub-groups of student athletes. Though this study gave one example of multiple groups (football/race, scholarship level, socioeconomic level), the lack of participants in other groups made it impractical to expand. It would be important to find out if, and how, the results change when using more than two categories of student athletes.

3. A case study approach could be added to the research to give an answer to the “why” question. For example, conducting interviews with a sample of the same population might explain why student athletes consistently ranked various relationships with others (high school coach, guidance counselor, and friends) as some of their lowest criteria. Information about what was seen and explained to the student athletes during their campus visits would also give a clearer understanding of what the student athletes were aware of when making their college choice decision.

4. Other subgroups of student athletes could be added to the research. It would be important to know if in-state student athletes respond similarly to out-of-state student athletes. If the groups respond differently, recruiting strategies need to be adjusted. Transfer and junior college student athlete responses could also be added to the research. The findings for these groups of student athletes would be important to know due to the fact that they had already taken part in the recruiting process. A comparison of the criteria used when selecting the University of Tennessee versus their previous institution could give a better understanding as to the influence of time and maturity on the college selection process.

5. It is suggested that this study be conducted with high school student athletes who are going through the recruiting process. It would be important to know what criteria student athletes use while making their college choice decision. Since this study was done after the student athletes enrolled, it would interesting to know if the criteria looked for matched the criteria actually used.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
(Cover Sheet for Questionnaire)

College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes: An Institutional Study

As a student athlete, you are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is three-fold: (a) to determine the criteria student athletes used in their college choice decision, (b) to determine if these criteria varied by sub-groups (such as sport played, race, gender, socioeconomic status, and scholarship level), and (c) to determine if the criteria stated by student athletes differ from the known criteria of general student populations.

INFORMATION

The number of participants that will be participating in the study is approximately 450 student athletes involved in the University of Tennessee men's and women's athletic programs.

Participation will be limited to a one-time response to a three-page questionnaire that will take approximately 5 – 10 minutes to complete.

Hopefully the data collected will give a clearer picture of the criteria student athletes deem important in their college choice decisions since student athletes historically have been left out of the research. It is hoped that this information will aid in the recruitment of student athletes and allow athletic departments to better allocate funding.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The anonymity of the respondents will be secure since no names will appear on the questionnaires. Data will be stored securely and will be made available only to the person conducting the study and his doctoral committee members unless the student athlete specifically gives permission in writing to do otherwise. No reference will be made in oral or written reports that could link the student athlete to the study. Questionnaires will be destroyed after a period of one year from completion of the research study.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, John (Pat) Teeple at pteeple@utk.edu or (931) 243-4801. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Research Compliance Services section of the Office of Research at (865) 974-3466.

PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be destroyed. The return of the completed questionnaire constitutes consent to participate.

Appendix B

College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes: An Institutional Study

A. In what sport are you participating? (Chose primary sport if more than one):

Men's sports

☐ Baseball ☐ Basketball
☐ Cross-country ☐ Football
☐ Track and field ☐ Tennis
☐ Golf
☐ Swimming and Diving

Women's sports

☐ Cross-country ☐ Basketball
☐ Softball ☐ Volleyball
☐ Track and field ☐ Tennis
☐ Golf ☐ Soccer
☐ Swimming and Diving
☐ Rowing

B. Race (What do you consider yourself?):

<input type="checkbox"/> African-American	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian -American
<input type="checkbox"/> Caucasian	<input type="checkbox"/> Latino / Latina
<input type="checkbox"/> Native American	<input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/> Middle-Eastern descent	<input type="checkbox"/> mixed

C. Parents educational level (chose one space for each parent):

Mother

☐ Did not graduate high school
☐ Graduated high school
☐ Some college
☐ College graduate
☐ Advanced degree
☐ Unknown / absent

Father

☐ Did not graduate high school
☐ Graduated high school
☐ Some college
☐ College graduate
☐ Advanced degree
☐ Unknown / absent

D. What scholarship level are you currently?

☐ Full ☐ Partial ☐ Non-scholarship

Please circle one number for each question, using the scale provided, to explain the possible reasons you chose the University of Tennessee.

1 not considered	2 not at all important	3 not very important	4 important	5 very important	
1. Size of school	1	2	3	4	5
2. Overall school reputation	1	2	3	4	5
3. School’s academic reputation	1	2	3	4	5
4. School’s location	1	2	3	4	5
5. Specific academic programs	1	2	3	4	5
6. College guides and publications (i.e. Peterson’s, U.S. News and World Report)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Your parent’s wishes / concerns	1	2	3	4	5
8. High school guidance counselor’s recommendation	1	2	3	4	5
9. Friend’s recommendation	1	2	3	4	5
10. Alumni of the school	1	2	3	4	5
11.Comfort with overall student body	1	2	3	4	5
12. Amount of financial aid given	1	2	3	4	5
13. Athletic facilities	1	2	3	4	5
14. Your high school coach’s recommendation	1	2	3	4	5

Please circle one number for each question, using the scale provided, to explain the possible reasons you chose the University of Tennessee.

1 not considered	2 not at all important	3 not very important	4 important	5 very important	
15. Comfort with your sport’s coaches	1	2	3	4	5
16. Comfort with players on your team	1	2	3	4	5
17. Your sports program’s reputation	1	2	3	4	5
18. Opportunity to win conference or national championships	1	2	3	4	5
19. Athletic conference reputation	1	2	3	4	5
20. Opportunity to play (or start) in your first year	1	2	3	4	5
21. Athletic schedule strength	1	2	3	4	5
22. Potential to play professionally in your sport	1	2	3	4	5
23. Official campus visit	1	2	3	4	5
24. College head coach for your sport	1	2	3	4	5
25. Chance to travel with sport played	1	2	3	4	5
26. Your team’s won/loss record	1	2	3	4	5
27. Television exposure for your sport	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

John Patrick Teeples
P.O. Box 641
Celina, Tennessee 38551
Home Phone (931) 243-4801
Email pteeples@utk.edu

January 15, 2004

Mr. Mike Hamilton
Director of Men's Athletics
1720 Volunteer Blvd.
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-3100

I am a current doctoral student in Higher Education at the University of Tennessee and am conducting research on college choice decisions of scholarship student athletes for my dissertation. I am asking for your permission to survey student athletes, and to help me in gathering my data.

We have talked briefly on this subject before and it is now time to gather my data. I am asking for your help in granting me access to team meetings so I can administer the questionnaires to the student athletes. If you could recommend someone to help me in this, it would be greatly appreciated.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed for your consent.

Sincerely,

John (Pat) Teeples

Appendix C

John Patrick Teeples
P.O. Box 641
Celina, Tennessee 38551
Home Phone (931) 243-4801
Email pteeples@utk.edu

January 15, 2004

Ms. Joan Cronan
Director of Women's Athletics
208 Thompson-Boiling Arena
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee 37996-4610

I am a current doctoral student in Higher Education at the University of Tennessee and am conducting research on college choice decisions of scholarship student athletes for my dissertation. I am asking for your permission to survey student athletes, and to help me in gathering my data.

We have talked briefly on this subject before and it is now time to gather my data. I am asking for your help in granting me access to team meetings so I can administer the questionnaires to the student athletes. If you could recommend someone to help me in this, it would be greatly appreciated.

A copy of the questionnaire is enclosed for your consent.

Sincerely,

John (Pat) Teeples

Appendix D

FORM A

IRB # _____

Certification for Exemption from IRB Review for Research Involving Human Subjects

A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(s) and/or CO-PI(s):

PI - John Patrick Teeples

Advisor – Dr. Gary Ubben

B. DEPARTMENT: Educational Administration and Policy Studies

C. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER OF PI(s) and CO-PI(s):

**John Patrick Teeples
P.O. Box 641
Celina, TN 38551
(931) 243-4801**

**Dr. Gary Ubben
A320 Claxton Addition
1126 Volunteer Blvd
(865) 974-6154**

D. TITLE OF PROJECT: College Choice Decisions of Student Athletes

E. EXTERNAL FUNDING AGENCY AND ID NUMBER: none

F. GRANT SUBMISSION DEADLINE: none

G. STARTING DATE: January 17, 2004

H. ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE: August 15, 2005

I. RESEARCH PROJECT:

1. **OBJECTIVE OF PROJECT:** The purpose of the project is three-fold: (a) to determine the criteria student athletes used in their college choice decision, (b) to determine if these criteria varied by sub-groups (such as sport played, race, gender, socioeconomic status, and scholarship level), and (c) to determine if the criteria stated by the student athletes differ from the known criteria of general student populations.

2. **SUBJECTS:** Student athletes involved in the University of Tennessee men's and women's athletic programs will constitute the population of the study and an effort will be made to survey each one. The University has approximately 450 student athletes competing in 18 sports: baseball, men's and women's basketball, men's and women's cross country, football, men's and women's golf, men's and women's track and field (both indoor and outdoor), women's soccer, women's softball, men's and women's

3. **METHODS OR PROCEDURES:** This research will use a survey research design to study college choice of student athletes at the University of Tennessee. The questionnaire (see attached appendix B) asks the student athletes to respond to six demographic categories (sport played, gender, race, parents educational level, year in school, and scholarship level), and to rank on a Likert-type scale a list of twenty-seven criteria for college choice selection. The first twelve criteria reflect common criteria students tend to consider when choosing a college. The additional criteria were added by the researcher in response to the distinctive nature of college athletics and of the culture in which college student athletes reside. Student athletes being surveyed will be guaranteed anonymity. No names, only descriptive information (sport participated in, background data, etc) will be used. A cover sheet (see attached Appendix A) to the questionnaire will include information about consent. The cover sheet will also be read aloud. The names of participants will not be included and participation will be voluntary. All data will be stored, under locked conditions for a period of three years, in the departmental office (room 335 of Claxton Addition) of Educational Administration and Policy Studies at the University of Tennessee. Access will be available only to the researcher and doctoral committee. (Investigator – John Pat Teeples, Chair - Dr. Gary Ubben, Committee personnel - Dr. Norma Mertz, Dr. Malcolm McInnis, and Dr. James Crook.)

J. CERTIFICATION: The research described herein is in compliance with 45 CFR 46.101(b) and presents subjects with no more than minimal risk as defined by applicable regulations.

APPROVED:
Dept. Head _____
Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix E

Table A.1: Total Percentages for All Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	5.1%	1.7%	10.0%	33.3%	49.8%	4.21
Athletic Conference Reputation	4.9%	1.7%	9.8%	37.5%	46.1%	4.18
Athletic Facilities	2.5%	3.2%	13.2%	37.5%	43.6%	4.17
Sports Program's Reputation	4.7%	1.2%	10.3%	40.2%	43.6%	4.17
Comfort with Other Players	5.6%	2.0%	9.1%	41.7%	41.7%	4.12
Comfort with Sport Coaches	5.4%	2.9%	15.0%	33.3%	43.4%	4.06
Overall School Reputation	2.2%	1.5%	17.2%	55.6%	23.5%	3.97
Chance to Travel with Team	6.1%	2.5%	19.4%	37.3%	34.8%	3.92
College Head Coach	8.6%	2.2%	14.5%	38.7%	36.0%	3.91
School Location	1.2%	4.9%	24.3%	45.1%	24.5%	3.87
Athletic Schedule Strength	7.1%	2.2%	16.9%	45.1%	28.7%	3.86
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	8.1%	4.2%	19.9%	37.0%	30.9%	3.78
Team's Won/Loss Record	9.1%	3.2%	19.6%	40.7%	27.5%	3.74
School's Academic Reputation	2.2%	4.9%	30.1%	48.8%	14.0%	3.67
Official Campus Visit	11.0%	5.4%	19.1%	39.0%	25.5%	3.63
Financial Aid	11.0%	8.8%	18.4%	32.1%	29.7%	3.61
Specific Academic Programs	2.5%	7.6%	36.5%	38.2%	15.2%	3.56
Parent's Wishes	4.4%	9.1%	25.7%	48.0%	12.7%	3.56
School Size	7.1%	5.6%	29.2%	48.8%	9.3%	3.48
Potential to Play Professionally	17.9%	10.0%	18.9%	20.3%	32.8%	3.40
Comfort with Student Body	9.6%	9.3%	27.2%	42.2%	11.8%	3.37
Television Exposure	20.8%	11.5%	25.0%	20.8%	21.8%	3.11
High School Coach's Recommendation	22.3%	15.2%	26.2%	27.5%	8.8%	2.85
College Guides and Publications	17.6%	26.5%	34.8%	16.9%	4.2%	2.63
Friend's Recommendation	29.7%	20.3%	30.1%	16.2%	3.7%	2.44
School Alumni	37.3%	16.4%	25.7%	16.9%	3.7%	2.33
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.0%	27.2%	25.2%	8.8%	1.7%	2.11

Table A.2: Total Percentages for All Female Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	9.8%	1.1%	7.5%	36.8%	44.8%	4.06
Athletic Facilities	3.4%	4.0%	16.7%	37.9%	37.9%	4.03
School Location	.6%	5.2%	23.6%	41.4%	29.3%	3.94
Comfort with Sport Coaches	9.8%	3.4%	18.4%	25.3%	43.1%	3.89
Sports Program's Reputation	8.6%	2.3%	15.5%	39.7%	33.9%	3.88
Opportunity to Win Championships	9.2%	3.4%	16.7%	33.3%	37.4%	3.86
Athletic Conference Reputation	8.6%	1.7%	17.8%	39.1%	32.8%	3.86
Chance to Travel with Team	8.6%	4.6%	18.4%	33.9%	34.5%	3.81
Overall School Reputation	2.3%	2.3%	22.4%	59.2%	13.8%	3.80
School's Academic Reputation	1.7%	2.9%	27.0%	51.7%	16.7%	3.79
College Head Coach	13.2%	2.9%	14.9%	31.0%	37.9%	3.78
Specific Academic Programs	.6%	5.2%	32.2%	43.1%	19.0%	3.75
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	11.5%	4.6%	18.4%	35.1%	30.5%	3.68
Athletic Schedule Strength	11.5%	3.4%	17.8%	45.4%	21.8%	3.63
Financial Aid	11.5%	9.2%	16.7%	34.5%	28.2%	3.59
Parent's Wishes	5.2%	9.2%	28.2%	43.7%	13.8%	3.52
Official Campus Visit	15.5%	6.3%	19.0%	32.2%	27.0%	3.49
Comfort with Student Body	7.5%	6.3%	29.9%	45.4%	10.9%	3.46
School Size	4.6%	4.6%	35.6%	51.1%	4.0%	3.45
Team's Won/Loss Record	16.1%	5.7%	25.9%	33.9%	18.4%	3.33
Potential to Play Professionally	27.0%	13.8%	28.2%	14.4%	16.7%	2.80
High School Coach's Recommendation	30.5%	14.9%	28.2%	20.1%	6.3%	2.57
College Guides and Publications	15.5%	33.3%	34.5%	16.1%	.6%	2.53
Television Exposure	35.6%	14.4%	29.9%	13.2%	6.9%	2.41
Friend's Recommendation	35.6%	20.1%	31.6%	10.9%	1.7%	2.23
School Alumni	43.1%	19.5%	24.1%	12.6%	.6%	2.08
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.9%	27.0%	29.3%	5.7%	.0%	2.03

Table A.3: Total Percentages for All Male Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	2.1%	.4%	5.1%	33.3%	59.0%	4.47
Athletic Conference Reputation	2.1%	1.7%	3.8%	36.3%	56.0%	4.42
Sports Program's Reputation	1.7%	.4%	6.4%	40.6%	50.9%	4.38
Athletic Facilities	1.7%	2.6%	10.7%	37.2%	47.9%	4.27
Comfort with Sport Coaches	2.1%	2.6%	12.4%	39.3%	43.6%	4.20
Comfort with Other Players	2.6%	2.6%	10.3%	45.3%	39.3%	4.16
Overall School Reputation	2.1%	.9%	13.2%	53.0%	30.8%	4.09
Team's Won/Loss Record	3.8%	1.3%	15.0%	45.7%	34.2%	4.05
Athletic Schedule Strength	3.8%	1.3%	16.2%	44.9%	33.8%	4.03
College Head Coach	5.1%	1.7%	14.1%	44.4%	34.6%	4.02
Chance to Travel with Team	4.3%	.9%	20.1%	39.7%	35.0%	4.00
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	5.6%	3.8%	20.9%	38.5%	31.2%	3.86
Potential to Play Professionally	11.1%	7.3%	12.0%	24.8%	44.9%	3.85
School Location	1.7%	4.7%	24.8%	47.9%	20.9%	3.82
Official Campus Visit	7.7%	4.7%	19.2%	44.0%	24.4%	3.73
Television Exposure	9.8%	9.4%	21.4%	26.5%	32.9%	3.63
Financial Aid	10.7%	8.5%	19.7%	30.3%	30.8%	3.62
School's Academic Reputation	2.6%	6.4%	32.5%	46.6%	12.0%	3.59
Parent's Wishes	3.8%	9.0%	23.9%	51.3%	12.0%	3.59
School Size	9.0%	6.4%	24.4%	47.0%	13.2%	3.49
Specific Academic Programs	3.8%	9.4%	39.7%	34.6%	12.4%	3.42
Comfort with Student Body	11.1%	11.5%	25.2%	39.7%	12.4%	3.31
High School Coach's Recommendation	16.2%	15.4%	24.8%	32.9%	10.7%	3.06
College Guides and Publications	19.2%	21.4%	35.0%	17.5%	6.8%	2.71
Friend's Recommendation	25.2%	20.5%	29.1%	20.1%	5.1%	2.59
School Alumni	32.9%	14.1%	26.9%	20.1%	6.0%	2.52
High School Guidance Recommendation	36.3%	27.4%	22.2%	11.1%	3.0%	2.17

Table A.4: Total Percentages for All Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	3.6%	3.6%	16.4%	34.9%	41.5%	4.07
Sports Program's Reputation	6.9%	1.5%	11.6%	41.8%	38.2%	4.03
Opportunity to Win Championships	7.3%	2.5%	12.7%	36.7%	40.7%	4.01
Athletic Conference Reputation	7.3%	2.2%	12.0%	39.6%	38.9%	4.01
Comfort with Other Players	8.0%	1.8%	10.9%	42.9%	36.4%	3.98
Comfort with Sport Coaches	8.0%	3.6%	17.1%	32.0%	39.3%	3.91
Overall School Reputation	2.5%	2.2%	18.9%	56.4%	20.0%	3.89
School Location	1.8%	5.8%	21.1%	46.2%	25.1%	3.87
Chance to Travel with Team	8.0%	3.6%	22.2%	35.6%	30.5%	3.77
College Head Coach	12.0%	2.9%	17.5%	36.4%	31.3%	3.72
Athletic Schedule Strength	9.8%	2.9%	20.0%	42.9%	24.4%	3.69
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	10.9%	4.7%	23.6%	36.0%	24.7%	3.59
School's Academic Reputation	2.5%	6.5%	33.8%	46.9%	10.2%	3.56
Team's Won/Loss Record	12.0%	3.3%	24.0%	41.5%	19.3%	3.53
Specific Academic Programs	2.9%	9.8%	36.0%	35.6%	15.6%	3.51
Financial Aid	11.6%	9.8%	20.4%	32.0%	26.2%	3.51
Parent's Wishes	4.7%	10.2%	28.7%	47.3%	9.1%	3.46
Official Campus Visit	14.9%	6.5%	21.8%	34.5%	22.2%	3.43
School Size	8.4%	5.5%	30.2%	49.1%	6.9%	3.41
Comfort with Student Body	10.5%	8.4%	29.5%	41.8%	9.8%	3.32
Potential to Play Professionally	25.8%	12.0%	20.0%	17.8%	24.4%	3.03
Television Exposure	28.4%	13.5%	29.5%	18.9%	9.8%	2.68
High School Coach's Recommendation	26.2%	18.5%	26.2%	22.5%	6.5%	2.65
College Guides and Publications	20.4%	30.2%	32.7%	14.5%	2.2%	2.48
Friend's Recommendation	31.3%	21.1%	28.0%	17.5%	2.2%	2.38
School Alumni	40.0%	15.6%	24.0%	17.5%	2.9%	2.28
High School Guidance Recommendation	42.5%	30.5%	20.0%	5.8%	1.1%	1.92

Table A.5: Total Percentages for All Non-Caucasian Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.8%	.0%	4.5%	26.3%	68.4%	4.62
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.8%	5.3%	33.1%	60.9%	4.54
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.8%	7.5%	36.8%	54.9%	4.46
Comfort with Other Players	.8%	2.3%	5.3%	39.1%	52.6%	4.41
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	1.5%	10.5%	36.1%	51.9%	4.38
Athletic Facilities	.0%	2.3%	6.8%	42.9%	48.1%	4.37
College Head Coach	1.5%	.8%	8.3%	43.6%	45.9%	4.32
Chance to Travel with Team	2.3%	.0%	13.5%	40.6%	43.6%	4.23
Athletic Schedule Strength	1.5%	.8%	10.5%	49.6%	37.6%	4.21
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	2.3%	3.0%	12.0%	39.1%	43.6%	4.19
Team's Won/Loss Record	3.0%	3.0%	10.5%	39.1%	44.4%	4.19
Potential to Play Professionally	1.5%	6.0%	16.5%	25.6%	50.4%	4.17
Overall School Reputation	1.5%	.0%	13.5%	54.1%	30.8%	4.13
Official Campus Visit	3.0%	3.0%	13.5%	48.1%	32.3%	4.04
Television Exposure	5.3%	7.5%	15.8%	24.8%	46.6%	4.00
School's Academic Reputation	1.5%	1.5%	22.6%	52.6%	21.8%	3.92
School Location	.0%	3.0%	30.8%	42.9%	23.3%	3.86
Financial Aid	9.8%	6.8%	14.3%	32.3%	36.8%	3.80
Parent's Wishes	3.8%	6.8%	19.5%	49.6%	20.3%	3.76
Specific Academic Programs	1.5%	3.0%	37.6%	43.6%	14.3%	3.66
School Size	4.5%	6.0%	27.1%	48.1%	14.3%	3.62
Comfort with Student Body	7.5%	11.3%	22.6%	42.9%	15.8%	3.48
High School Coach's Recommendation	14.3%	8.3%	26.3%	37.6%	13.5%	3.28
College Guides and Publications	12.0%	18.8%	39.1%	21.8%	8.3%	2.95
Friend's Recommendation	26.3%	18.8%	34.6%	13.5%	6.8%	2.56
High School Guidance Recommendation	25.6%	20.3%	36.1%	15.0%	3.0%	2.50
School Alumni	31.6%	18.0%	29.3%	15.8%	5.3%	2.45

Table A.6: Total Percentages for Student Athletes Whose Parents/Parent Had a High School or Less Education

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	6.5%	.0%	2.2%	30.4%	60.9%	4.39
Athletic Conference Reputation	6.5%	.0%	2.2%	32.6%	58.7%	4.37
Athletic Facilities	6.5%	.0%	6.5%	30.4%	56.5%	4.30
Overall School Reputation	4.3%	.0%	13.0%	47.8%	34.8%	4.09
Comfort with Other Players	6.5%	.0%	6.5%	52.2%	34.8%	4.09
Sports Program's Reputation	6.5%	.0%	10.9%	47.8%	34.8%	4.04
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	10.9%	2.2%	6.5%	32.6%	47.8%	4.04
Chance to Travel with Team	8.7%	.0%	13.0%	37.0%	41.3%	4.02
Athletic Schedule Strength	6.5%	2.2%	8.7%	50.0%	32.6%	4.00
Potential to Play Professionally	10.9%	2.2%	13.0%	23.9%	50.0%	4.00
School Location	2.2%	2.2%	19.6%	47.8%	28.3%	3.98
Comfort with Sport Coaches	10.9%	.0%	8.7%	43.5%	37.0%	3.96
College Head Coach	13.0%	2.2%	4.3%	43.5%	37.0%	3.89
Team's Won/Loss Record	10.9%	2.2%	13.0%	43.5%	30.4%	3.80
Official Campus Visit	10.9%	4.3%	13.0%	39.1%	32.6%	3.78
Television Exposure	10.9%	6.5%	17.4%	23.9%	41.3%	3.78
Financial Aid	13.0%	4.3%	17.4%	28.3%	37.0%	3.72
School's Academic Reputation	2.2%	6.5%	32.6%	39.1%	19.6%	3.67
School Size	4.3%	6.5%	30.4%	37.0%	21.7%	3.65
Parent's Wishes	2.2%	10.9%	28.3%	41.3%	17.4%	3.61
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	10.9%	43.5%	28.3%	17.4%	3.52
High School Coach's Recommendation	17.4%	10.9%	17.4%	39.1%	15.2%	3.24
Comfort with Student Body	8.7%	15.2%	37.0%	28.3%	10.9%	3.17
College Guides and Publications	17.4%	23.9%	39.1%	13.0%	6.5%	2.67
School Alumni	30.4%	15.2%	26.1%	19.6%	8.7%	2.61
Friend's Recommendation	21.7%	23.9%	37.0%	8.7%	8.7%	2.59
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.0%	26.1%	28.3%	4.3%	4.3%	2.13

Table A.7: Total Percentages for Student Athletes Who Had Only One Parent Who Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Conference Reputation	1.2%	.0%	8.5%	34.1%	56.1%	4.44
Opportunity to Win Championships	2.4%	1.2%	7.3%	31.7%	57.3%	4.40
Athletic Facilities	2.4%	3.7%	4.9%	36.6%	52.4%	4.33
Sports Program's Reputation	2.4%	1.2%	9.8%	36.6%	50.0%	4.30
Comfort with Other Players	3.7%	1.2%	9.8%	32.9%	52.4%	4.29
Comfort with Sport Coaches	3.7%	3.7%	11.0%	30.5%	51.2%	4.22
Athletic Schedule Strength	3.7%	1.2%	12.2%	46.3%	36.6%	4.11
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	3.7%	.0%	20.7%	35.4%	40.2%	4.09
College Head Coach	6.1%	1.2%	11.0%	41.5%	40.2%	4.09
Chance to Travel with Team	2.4%	1.2%	17.1%	43.9%	35.4%	4.09
School Location	1.2%	2.4%	20.7%	41.5%	34.1%	4.05
Overall School Reputation	1.2%	.0%	17.1%	58.5%	23.2%	4.02
Team's Won/Loss Record	4.9%	3.7%	15.9%	40.2%	35.4%	3.98
Official Campus Visit	6.1%	2.4%	15.9%	40.2%	35.4%	3.96
Parent's Wishes	3.7%	6.1%	19.5%	51.2%	19.5%	3.77
Potential to Play Professionally	8.5%	7.3%	22.0%	23.2%	39.0%	3.77
School's Academic Reputation	2.4%	4.9%	28.0%	43.9%	20.7%	3.76
Financial Aid	12.2%	8.5%	12.2%	29.3%	37.8%	3.72
Specific Academic Programs	3.7%	4.9%	29.3%	47.6%	14.6%	3.65
Television Exposure	12.2%	13.4%	23.2%	20.7%	30.5%	3.44
Comfort with Student Body	12.2%	8.5%	18.3%	50.0%	11.0%	3.39
School Size	12.2%	4.9%	28.0%	47.6%	7.3%	3.33
High School Coach's Recommendation	19.5%	9.8%	29.3%	31.7%	9.8%	3.02
College Guides and Publications	17.1%	18.3%	46.3%	14.6%	3.7%	2.70
Friend's Recommendation	31.7%	20.7%	29.3%	17.1%	1.2%	2.35
School Alumni	35.4%	14.6%	32.9%	13.4%	3.7%	2.35
High School Guidance Recommendation	36.6%	24.4%	24.4%	12.2%	2.4%	2.20

Table A.8: Total Percentages for Student Athletes for Whom Both Parents Attended College

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Sports Program's Reputation	5.0%	1.4%	10.4%	40.0%	43.2%	4.15
Opportunity to Win Championships	5.7%	2.1%	12.1%	34.3%	45.7%	4.12
Athletic Facilities	1.8%	3.6%	16.8%	38.9%	38.9%	4.10
Comfort with Other Players	6.1%	2.5%	9.3%	42.5%	39.6%	4.07
Athletic Conference Reputation	5.7%	2.5%	11.4%	39.3%	41.1%	4.07
Comfort with Sport Coaches	5.0%	3.2%	17.1%	32.5%	42.1%	4.04
Overall School Reputation	2.1%	2.1%	17.9%	56.1%	21.8%	3.93
College Head Coach	8.6%	2.5%	17.1%	37.1%	34.6%	3.87
Chance to Travel with Team	6.8%	3.2%	21.1%	35.4%	33.6%	3.86
School Location	1.1%	6.1%	26.1%	45.7%	21.1%	3.80
Athletic Schedule Strength	8.2%	2.5%	19.6%	43.9%	25.7%	3.76
Team's Won/Loss Record	10.0%	3.2%	21.8%	40.4%	24.6%	3.66
School's Academic Reputation	2.1%	4.6%	30.4%	51.8%	11.1%	3.65
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	8.9%	5.7%	21.8%	38.2%	25.4%	3.65
Financial Aid	10.4%	9.6%	20.4%	33.6%	26.1%	3.55
Specific Academic Programs	2.5%	7.9%	37.5%	37.1%	15.0%	3.54
Official Campus Visit	12.5%	6.4%	21.1%	38.6%	21.4%	3.50
Parent's Wishes	5.0%	9.6%	27.1%	48.2%	10.0%	3.49
School Size	6.1%	5.7%	29.3%	51.1%	7.9%	3.49
Comfort with Student Body	8.9%	8.6%	28.2%	42.1%	12.1%	3.40
Potential to Play Professionally	21.8%	12.1%	18.9%	18.9%	28.2%	3.20
Television Exposure	25.0%	11.8%	26.8%	20.4%	16.1%	2.91
High School Coach's Recommendation	23.9%	17.5%	26.8%	24.3%	7.5%	2.74
College Guides and Publications	17.9%	29.3%	30.7%	18.2%	3.9%	2.61
Friend's Recommendation	30.4%	19.6%	29.3%	17.1%	3.6%	2.44
School Alumni	38.9%	17.1%	23.6%	17.5%	2.9%	2.28
High School Guidance Recommendation	37.1%	28.2%	25.0%	8.6%	1.1%	2.08

Table A.9: Total Percentages for Full Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	3.8%	28.8%	67.3%	4.63
Athletic Conference Reputation	.6%	.0%	5.1%	34.0%	60.3%	4.53
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.6%	6.4%	35.9%	57.1%	4.49
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	6.4%	39.1%	54.5%	4.48
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.6%	9.0%	37.2%	53.2%	4.43
Comfort with Other Players	.6%	.6%	4.5%	43.6%	50.6%	4.43
College Head Coach	1.3%	.0%	9.0%	42.9%	46.8%	4.34
Potential to Play Professionally	3.2%	2.6%	10.9%	27.6%	55.8%	4.30
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	1.9%	1.9%	12.2%	37.2%	46.8%	4.25
Athletic Schedule Strength	1.3%	1.3%	9.6%	47.4%	40.4%	4.24
Chance to Travel with Team	1.3%	.6%	16.0%	38.5%	43.6%	4.22
Team's Won/Loss Record	1.9%	1.3%	13.5%	39.7%	43.6%	4.22
Overall School Reputation	1.3%	1.3%	11.5%	55.1%	30.8%	4.13
Official Campus Visit	5.1%	2.6%	12.2%	46.2%	34.0%	4.01
Television Exposure	7.7%	1.9%	19.2%	25.6%	45.5%	3.99
Financial Aid	9.6%	5.1%	10.9%	29.5%	44.9%	3.95
Parent's Wishes	3.2%	7.1%	16.7%	52.6%	20.5%	3.80
School Location	.0%	5.8%	30.8%	42.3%	21.2%	3.79
School's Academic Reputation	2.6%	2.6%	30.8%	45.5%	18.6%	3.75
Specific Academic Programs	.6%	6.4%	42.3%	37.8%	12.8%	3.56
School Size	6.4%	7.1%	30.1%	43.6%	12.8%	3.49
Comfort with Student Body	9.6%	12.2%	22.4%	42.3%	13.5%	3.38
High School Coach's Recommendation	14.1%	12.2%	25.0%	36.5%	12.2%	3.21
College Guides and Publications	14.1%	22.4%	38.5%	19.2%	5.8%	2.80
Friend's Recommendation	26.9%	18.6%	34.6%	13.5%	6.4%	2.54
School Alumni	35.9%	12.8%	31.4%	13.5%	6.4%	2.42
High School Guidance Recommendation	30.8%	22.4%	34.0%	8.3%	4.5%	2.33

Table A.10: Total Percentages for Partial Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	2.7%	4.1%	17.0%	36.1%	40.1%	4.07
Comfort with Other Players	8.2%	2.0%	10.2%	39.5%	40.1%	4.01
Sports Program's Reputation	6.8%	1.4%	11.6%	44.2%	36.1%	4.01
Comfort with Sport Coaches	7.5%	2.7%	17.0%	27.9%	44.9%	4.00
Athletic Conference Reputation	8.2%	2.0%	13.6%	36.1%	40.1%	3.98
Opportunity to Win Championships	8.2%	2.0%	15.0%	39.5%	35.4%	3.92
School Location	2.0%	5.4%	20.4%	46.3%	25.9%	3.88
Overall School Reputation	3.4%	.7%	19.7%	60.5%	15.6%	3.84
College Head Coach	10.9%	2.7%	15.6%	35.4%	35.4%	3.82
Chance to Travel with Team	8.2%	3.4%	18.4%	38.1%	32.0%	3.82
Financial Aid	4.8%	8.2%	19.0%	39.5%	28.6%	3.79
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	9.5%	3.4%	21.1%	40.1%	25.9%	3.69
Athletic Schedule Strength	10.2%	2.0%	19.7%	44.2%	23.8%	3.69
Official Campus Visit	9.5%	4.8%	19.7%	39.5%	26.5%	3.69
School's Academic Reputation	2.0%	5.4%	30.6%	49.7%	12.2%	3.65
Specific Academic Programs	4.1%	6.8%	32.7%	40.1%	16.3%	3.58
School Size	6.8%	6.8%	29.9%	50.3%	6.1%	3.42
Team's Won/Loss Record	12.9%	4.8%	23.8%	44.9%	13.6%	3.41
Comfort with Student Body	8.8%	8.2%	28.6%	43.5%	10.9%	3.39
Parent's Wishes	5.4%	12.9%	29.3%	44.9%	7.5%	3.36
Potential to Play Professionally	25.2%	12.9%	25.2%	14.3%	22.4%	2.96
High School Coach's Recommendation	28.6%	16.3%	27.2%	19.0%	8.8%	2.63
College Guides and Publications	19.0%	29.9%	32.0%	15.6%	3.4%	2.54
Television Exposure	29.3%	19.0%	34.7%	12.9%	4.1%	2.44
Friend's Recommendation	34.7%	19.0%	27.2%	17.7%	1.4%	2.32
School Alumni	38.8%	19.7%	19.0%	19.0%	3.4%	2.29
High School Guidance Recommendation	40.1%	32.7%	19.7%	7.5%	.0%	1.95

Table A.11: Total Percentages for Non-Scholarship Student Athletes

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	8.6%	3.8%	12.4%	31.4%	43.8%	3.98
School Location	1.9%	2.9%	20.0%	47.6%	27.6%	3.96
Athletic Conference Reputation	6.7%	3.8%	11.4%	44.8%	33.3%	3.94
Sports Program's Reputation	8.6%	2.9%	14.3%	36.2%	38.1%	3.92
Overall School Reputation	1.9%	2.9%	21.9%	49.5%	23.8%	3.90
Athletic Facilities	5.7%	5.7%	18.1%	41.9%	28.6%	3.82
Comfort with Other Players	9.5%	3.8%	14.3%	41.9%	30.5%	3.80
Comfort with Sport Coaches	10.5%	6.7%	21.0%	35.2%	26.7%	3.61
Chance to Travel with Team	10.5%	3.8%	25.7%	34.3%	25.7%	3.61
School's Academic Reputation	1.9%	7.6%	28.6%	52.4%	9.5%	3.60
Specific Academic Programs	2.9%	10.5%	33.3%	36.2%	17.1%	3.54
Athletic Schedule Strength	11.4%	3.8%	23.8%	42.9%	18.1%	3.52
School Size	8.6%	1.9%	26.7%	54.3%	8.6%	3.52
Team's Won/Loss Record	14.3%	3.8%	22.9%	36.2%	22.9%	3.50
Parent's Wishes	4.8%	6.7%	34.3%	45.7%	8.6%	3.47
College Head Coach	16.2%	4.8%	21.0%	37.1%	21.0%	3.42
Comfort with Student Body	10.5%	6.7%	32.4%	40.0%	10.5%	3.33
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	15.2%	8.6%	29.5%	32.4%	14.3%	3.22
Official Campus Visit	21.9%	10.5%	28.6%	27.6%	11.4%	2.96
Financial Aid	21.9%	15.2%	28.6%	25.7%	8.6%	2.84
Television Exposure	28.6%	15.2%	20.0%	24.8%	11.4%	2.75
Potential to Play Professionally	29.5%	17.1%	21.9%	18.1%	13.3%	2.69
High School Coach's Recommendation	25.7%	18.1%	26.7%	25.7%	3.8%	2.64
College Guides and Publications	21.0%	27.6%	33.3%	15.2%	2.9%	2.51
Friend's Recommendation	26.7%	24.8%	27.6%	18.1%	2.9%	2.46
School Alumni	37.1%	17.1%	26.7%	19.0%	.0%	2.28
High School Guidance Recommendation	41.9%	26.7%	20.0%	11.4%	.0%	2.01

Table A.12: Total Percentages for Men's Baseball

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Conference Reputation	3.2%	.0%	3.2%	32.3%	61.3%	4.48
Opportunity to Win Championships	3.2%	.0%	3.2%	41.9%	51.6%	4.39
Potential to Play Professionally	6.5%	.0%	3.2%	32.3%	58.1%	4.35
Athletic Facilities	.0%	3.2%	12.9%	32.3%	51.6%	4.32
Sports Program's Reputation	3.2%	.0%	9.7%	41.9%	45.2%	4.26
Athletic Schedule Strength	3.2%	.0%	22.6%	32.3%	41.9%	4.10
Comfort with Other Players	3.2%	3.2%	16.1%	48.4%	29.0%	3.97
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	6.5%	.0%	16.1%	45.2%	32.3%	3.97
Overall School Reputation	6.5%	.0%	12.9%	54.8%	25.8%	3.94
Chance to Travel with Team	3.2%	.0%	22.6%	54.8%	19.4%	3.87
Comfort with Sport Coaches	6.5%	6.5%	16.1%	38.7%	32.3%	3.84
Team's Won/Loss Record	3.2%	.0%	22.6%	61.3%	12.9%	3.81
School Location	3.2%	6.5%	22.6%	51.6%	16.1%	3.71
Financial Aid	3.2%	9.7%	29.0%	35.5%	22.6%	3.65
School's Academic Reputation	3.2%	6.5%	35.5%	45.2%	9.7%	3.52
College Head Coach	12.9%	6.5%	12.9%	51.6%	16.1%	3.52
School Size	9.7%	3.2%	25.8%	51.6%	9.7%	3.48
Official Campus Visit	12.9%	6.5%	32.3%	29.0%	19.4%	3.35
Parent's Wishes	.0%	22.6%	29.0%	45.2%	3.2%	3.29
Specific Academic Programs	9.7%	12.9%	35.5%	29.0%	12.9%	3.23
Television Exposure	3.2%	12.9%	45.2%	35.5%	3.2%	3.23
Comfort with Student Body	16.1%	12.9%	35.5%	25.8%	9.7%	3.00
High School Coach's Recommendation	16.1%	22.6%	29.0%	25.8%	6.5%	2.84
Friend's Recommendation	25.8%	19.4%	29.0%	25.8%	.0%	2.55
School Alumni	22.6%	25.8%	25.8%	25.8%	.0%	2.55
College Guides and Publications	25.8%	22.6%	45.2%	6.5%	.0%	2.32
High School Guidance Recommendation	41.9%	35.5%	16.1%	6.5%	.0%	1.87

Table A.13: Total Percentages for Men's Basketball

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Television Exposure	.0%	.0%	5.9%	35.3%	58.8%	4.53
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	.0%	52.9%	47.1%	4.47
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	5.9%	41.2%	52.9%	4.47
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	.0%	.0%	52.9%	47.1%	4.47
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	.0%	58.8%	41.2%	4.41
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	58.8%	41.2%	4.41
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	5.9%	5.9%	35.3%	52.9%	4.35
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	.0%	64.7%	35.3%	4.35
Comfort with Student Body	.0%	.0%	5.9%	58.8%	35.3%	4.29
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	5.9%	58.8%	35.3%	4.29
School Location	.0%	.0%	11.8%	52.9%	35.3%	4.24
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	.0%	76.5%	23.5%	4.24
Official Campus Visit	.0%	.0%	11.8%	52.9%	35.3%	4.24
High School Coach's Recommendation	.0%	5.9%	5.9%	52.9%	35.3%	4.18
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	.0%	11.8%	64.7%	23.5%	4.12
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	23.5%	41.2%	35.3%	4.12
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	5.9%	76.5%	17.6%	4.12
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	5.9%	76.5%	17.6%	4.12
Potential to Play Professionally	.0%	11.8%	5.9%	41.2%	41.2%	4.12
Financial Aid	.0%	.0%	23.5%	47.1%	29.4%	4.06
Parent's Wishes	.0%	.0%	11.8%	76.5%	11.8%	4.00
School Size	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	4.00
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	11.8%	82.4%	5.9%	3.94
High School Guidance Recommendation	.0%	11.8%	11.8%	52.9%	23.5%	3.88
Friend's Recommendation	.0%	17.6%	17.6%	23.5%	41.2%	3.88
School Alumni	5.9%	5.9%	35.3%	23.5%	29.4%	3.65
College Guides and Publications	5.9%	17.6%	23.5%	17.6%	35.3%	3.59

Table A.14: Total Percentages for Men's Football

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	1.1%	.0%	16.1%	82.8%	4.81
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	1.1%	3.2%	31.2%	64.5%	4.59
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	1.1%	3.2%	39.8%	55.9%	4.51
Television Exposure	2.2%	1.1%	9.7%	28.0%	59.1%	4.41
Athletic Facilities	2.2%	.0%	5.4%	40.9%	51.6%	4.40
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	2.2%	8.6%	43.0%	46.2%	4.33
Team's Won/Loss Record	3.2%	.0%	9.7%	36.6%	50.5%	4.31
Overall School Reputation	1.1%	.0%	9.7%	47.3%	41.9%	4.29
Potential to Play Professionally	4.3%	3.2%	8.6%	28.0%	55.9%	4.28
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	3.2%	10.8%	48.4%	37.6%	4.20
College Head Coach	4.3%	1.1%	15.1%	43.0%	36.6%	4.06
Athletic Schedule Strength	3.2%	2.2%	15.1%	45.2%	34.4%	4.05
Chance to Travel with Team	5.4%	.0%	26.9%	35.5%	32.3%	3.89
Parent's Wishes	4.3%	5.4%	18.3%	48.4%	23.7%	3.82
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	6.5%	3.2%	22.6%	37.6%	30.1%	3.82
School Location	.0%	4.3%	32.3%	43.0%	20.4%	3.80
Official Campus Visit	8.6%	4.3%	16.1%	46.2%	24.7%	3.74
School's Academic Reputation	3.2%	6.5%	36.6%	39.8%	14.0%	3.55
School Size	9.7%	7.5%	22.6%	44.1%	16.1%	3.49
Financial Aid	20.4%	10.8%	12.9%	19.4%	36.6%	3.41
Specific Academic Programs	1.1%	11.8%	46.2%	32.3%	8.6%	3.35
Comfort with Student Body	14.0%	15.1%	23.7%	37.6%	9.7%	3.14
High School Coach's Recommendation	18.3%	14.0%	21.5%	40.9%	5.4%	3.01
College Guides and Publications	20.4%	18.3%	40.9%	14.0%	6.5%	2.68
Friend's Recommendation	29.0%	21.5%	33.3%	15.1%	1.1%	2.38
School Alumni	39.8%	14.0%	25.8%	16.1%	4.3%	2.31
High School Guidance Recommendation	41.9%	26.9%	28.0%	2.2%	1.1%	1.94

Table A.15: Total Percentages for Men's Golf

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	9.1%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	72.7%	4.45
Opportunity to Win Championships	9.1%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	72.7%	4.45
Athletic Conference Reputation	9.1%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	72.7%	4.45
Potential to Play Professionally	9.1%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	72.7%	4.45
Sports Program's Reputation	9.1%	.0%	.0%	27.3%	63.6%	4.36
Athletic Schedule Strength	9.1%	.0%	.0%	36.4%	54.5%	4.27
Chance to Travel with Team	9.1%	.0%	9.1%	27.3%	54.5%	4.18
Overall School Reputation	9.1%	.0%	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	4.00
School Location	9.1%	.0%	18.2%	27.3%	45.5%	4.00
Financial Aid	.0%	9.1%	27.3%	36.4%	27.3%	3.82
Comfort with Sport Coaches	18.2%	.0%	18.2%	18.2%	45.5%	3.73
Comfort with Other Players	18.2%	.0%	.0%	54.5%	27.3%	3.73
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	9.1%	9.1%	18.2%	27.3%	36.4%	3.73
College Head Coach	9.1%	9.1%	9.1%	45.5%	27.3%	3.73
Team's Won/Loss Record	9.1%	.0%	9.1%	72.7%	9.1%	3.73
Official Campus Visit	18.2%	.0%	18.2%	45.5%	18.2%	3.45
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	9.1%	54.5%	36.4%	.0%	3.27
Parent's Wishes	9.1%	18.2%	9.1%	63.6%	.0%	3.27
Television Exposure	18.2%	9.1%	18.2%	36.4%	18.2%	3.27
Comfort with Student Body	9.1%	9.1%	45.5%	27.3%	9.1%	3.18
School Size	9.1%	27.3%	18.2%	36.4%	9.1%	3.09
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	27.3%	36.4%	36.4%	.0%	3.09
School Alumni	27.3%	9.1%	27.3%	18.2%	18.2%	2.91
Friend's Recommendation	18.2%	18.2%	36.4%	27.3%	.0%	2.73
College Guides and Publications	9.1%	27.3%	54.5%	9.1%	.0%	2.64
High School Guidance Recommendation	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	.0%	.0%	2.00
High School Coach's Recommendation	36.4%	27.3%	36.4%	.0%	.0%	2.00

Table A.16: Total Percentages for Men's Swimming and Diving

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	.0%	34.8%	65.2%	4.65
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	8.7%	34.8%	56.5%	4.48
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	8.7%	34.8%	56.5%	4.48
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	4.3%	8.7%	30.4%	56.5%	4.39
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	4.3%	8.7%	39.1%	47.8%	4.30
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	26.1%	26.1%	47.8%	4.22
Official Campus Visit	4.3%	4.3%	8.7%	47.8%	34.8%	4.04
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	21.7%	60.9%	17.4%	3.96
Financial Aid	4.3%	4.3%	13.0%	52.2%	26.1%	3.91
Athletic Facilities	.0%	8.7%	26.1%	30.4%	34.8%	3.91
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	4.3%	26.1%	47.8%	21.7%	3.87
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	26.1%	65.2%	8.7%	3.83
Athletic Schedule Strength	4.3%	.0%	26.1%	52.2%	17.4%	3.78
School Location	8.7%	.0%	30.4%	52.2%	8.7%	3.52
Team's Won/Loss Record	4.3%	.0%	47.8%	39.1%	8.7%	3.48
School's Academic Reputation	4.3%	4.3%	39.1%	52.2%	.0%	3.39
Comfort with Student Body	8.7%	4.3%	34.8%	43.5%	8.7%	3.39
Parent's Wishes	8.7%	4.3%	39.1%	43.5%	4.3%	3.30
Specific Academic Programs	13.0%	.0%	56.5%	26.1%	4.3%	3.09
School Size	17.4%	4.3%	34.8%	39.1%	4.3%	3.09
High School Coach's Recommendation	17.4%	30.4%	21.7%	17.4%	13.0%	2.78
Friend's Recommendation	26.1%	21.7%	26.1%	21.7%	4.3%	2.57
School Alumni	39.1%	8.7%	21.7%	26.1%	4.3%	2.48
College Guides and Publications	39.1%	26.1%	26.1%	8.7%	.0%	2.04
Potential to Play Professionally	47.8%	21.7%	17.4%	4.3%	8.7%	2.04
Television Exposure	43.5%	17.4%	34.8%	4.3%	.0%	2.00
High School Guidance Recommendation	47.8%	30.4%	21.7%	.0%	.0%	1.74

Table A.17: Total Percentages for Men's Tennis

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	4.33
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	4.33
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	4.33
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	4.33
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	.0%	.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	4.17
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	.0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	4.17
School Location	.0%	.0%	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	4.00
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	50.0%	4.00
Parent's Wishes	.0%	.0%	16.7%	83.3%	.0%	3.83
Overall School Reputation	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	3.67
High School Guidance Recommendation	16.7%	16.7%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	3.50
Comfort with Student Body	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%	.0%	3.50
High School Coach's Recommendation	16.7%	16.7%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	3.50
Potential to Play Professionally	.0%	50.0%	.0%	.0%	50.0%	3.50
Official Campus Visit	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%	3.50
School Size	.0%	16.7%	50.0%	.0%	33.3%	3.50
College Guides and Publications	.0%	33.3%	.0%	66.7%	.0%	3.33
Friend's Recommendation	16.7%	16.7%	.0%	50.0%	16.7%	3.33
Television Exposure	.0%	16.7%	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	3.33
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	16.7%	66.7%	.0%	16.7%	3.17
School Alumni	16.7%	.0%	66.7%	.0%	16.7%	3.00
Financial Aid	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	3.00
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	16.7%	83.3%	.0%	.0%	2.83

Table A.18: Total Percentages for Men's Track and Field

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Sports Program's Reputation	3.8%	.0%	11.3%	35.8%	49.1%	4.26
Opportunity to Win Championships	5.7%	.0%	9.4%	34.0%	50.9%	4.25
Athletic Conference Reputation	5.7%	3.8%	5.7%	39.6%	45.3%	4.15
Athletic Facilities	1.9%	5.7%	15.1%	32.1%	45.3%	4.13
Comfort with Sport Coaches	1.9%	1.9%	20.8%	37.7%	37.7%	4.08
Overall School Reputation	1.9%	1.9%	15.1%	54.7%	26.4%	4.02
Chance to Travel with Team	5.7%	1.9%	11.3%	49.1%	32.1%	4.00
Comfort with Other Players	5.7%	3.8%	15.1%	37.7%	37.7%	3.98
Athletic Schedule Strength	5.7%	1.9%	17.0%	41.5%	34.0%	3.96
College Head Coach	5.7%	.0%	20.8%	41.5%	32.1%	3.94
Team's Won/Loss Record	5.7%	5.7%	13.2%	45.3%	30.2%	3.89
School Location	.0%	9.4%	17.0%	52.8%	20.8%	3.85
School's Academic Reputation	1.9%	7.5%	18.9%	58.5%	13.2%	3.74
Financial Aid	5.7%	7.5%	24.5%	32.1%	30.2%	3.74
Specific Academic Programs	3.8%	5.7%	24.5%	47.2%	18.9%	3.72
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	7.5%	5.7%	24.5%	34.0%	28.3%	3.70
Official Campus Visit	5.7%	5.7%	22.6%	45.3%	20.8%	3.70
School Size	7.5%	3.8%	28.3%	43.4%	17.0%	3.58
Comfort with Student Body	9.4%	11.3%	20.8%	43.4%	15.1%	3.43
Potential to Play Professionally	15.1%	7.5%	26.4%	22.6%	28.3%	3.42
Parent's Wishes	3.8%	11.3%	32.1%	49.1%	3.8%	3.38
High School Coach's Recommendation	13.2%	7.5%	35.8%	30.2%	13.2%	3.23
Television Exposure	15.1%	20.8%	24.5%	24.5%	15.1%	3.04
College Guides and Publications	13.2%	22.6%	26.4%	30.2%	7.5%	2.96
Friend's Recommendation	28.3%	20.8%	28.3%	18.9%	3.8%	2.49
School Alumni	35.8%	15.1%	24.5%	22.6%	1.9%	2.40
High School Guidance Recommendation	35.8%	20.8%	22.6%	20.8%	.0%	2.28

Table A.19: Total Percentages for Women's Basketball

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	.0%	9.1%	90.9%	4.91
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	81.8%	4.82
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	81.8%	4.82
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	.0%	27.3%	72.7%	4.73
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	27.3%	72.7%	4.73
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	.0%	.0%	27.3%	72.7%	4.73
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	9.1%	27.3%	63.6%	4.55
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	9.1%	27.3%	63.6%	4.55
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	9.1%	36.4%	54.5%	4.45
Television Exposure	.0%	.0%	9.1%	36.4%	54.5%	4.45
Chance to Travel with Team	9.1%	.0%	.0%	27.3%	63.6%	4.36
Potential to Play Professionally	9.1%	.0%	18.2%	9.1%	63.6%	4.18
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	9.1%	.0%	9.1%	36.4%	45.5%	4.09
School's Academic Reputation	9.1%	.0%	18.2%	27.3%	45.5%	4.00
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	27.3%	45.5%	27.3%	4.00
Parent's Wishes	.0%	9.1%	9.1%	54.5%	27.3%	4.00
Overall School Reputation	9.1%	.0%	18.2%	36.4%	36.4%	3.91
School Location	.0%	.0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	3.91
High School Coach's Recommendation	9.1%	.0%	18.2%	45.5%	27.3%	3.82
Official Campus Visit	18.2%	.0%	.0%	45.5%	36.4%	3.82
Comfort with Student Body	9.1%	9.1%	27.3%	27.3%	27.3%	3.55
Financial Aid	27.3%	.0%	9.1%	27.3%	36.4%	3.45
School Size	18.2%	.0%	54.5%	18.2%	9.1%	3.00
College Guides and Publications	9.1%	9.1%	63.6%	18.2%	.0%	2.91
Friend's Recommendation	36.4%	9.1%	36.4%	9.1%	9.1%	2.45
High School Guidance Recommendation	36.4%	9.1%	45.5%	9.1%	.0%	2.27
School Alumni	45.5%	.0%	36.4%	18.2%	.0%	2.27

Table A.20: Total Percentages for Women's Golf

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	.0%	16.7%	83.3%	4.83
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	4.67
Financial Aid	.0%	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	4.50
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	4.50
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	4.50
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	66.7%	4.50
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	4.33
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	66.7%	33.3%	4.33
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	16.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	83.3%	4.33
Potential to Play Professionally	.0%	.0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	4.17
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	4.00
School Location	.0%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	4.00
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	4.00
Parent's Wishes	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	3.83
Official Campus Visit	.0%	16.7%	.0%	66.7%	16.7%	3.83
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	16.7%	33.3%	.0%	50.0%	3.83
Comfort with Student Body	.0%	.0%	50.0%	33.3%	16.7%	3.67
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	.0%	3.50
School's Academic Reputation	16.7%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%	3.33
College Guides and Publications	.0%	33.3%	16.7%	50.0%	.0%	3.17
Friend's Recommendation	16.7%	.0%	50.0%	33.3%	.0%	3.00
School Size	16.7%	.0%	66.7%	16.7%	.0%	2.83
Television Exposure	50.0%	.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	2.50
High School Guidance Recommendation	33.3%	16.7%	33.3%	16.7%	.0%	2.33
High School Coach's Recommendation	50.0%	16.7%	16.7%	16.7%	.0%	2.00
School Alumni	50.0%	16.7%	33.3%	.0%	.0%	1.83

Table A.21: Total Percentages for Women's Rowing

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
School Location	2.3%	4.7%	18.6%	37.2%	37.2%	4.02
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	2.3%	20.9%	51.2%	25.6%	4.00
School's Academic Reputation	2.3%	2.3%	20.9%	65.1%	9.3%	3.77
Overall School Reputation	7.0%	2.3%	18.6%	58.1%	14.0%	3.70
Athletic Facilities	11.6%	4.7%	20.9%	44.2%	18.6%	3.53
School Size	4.7%	4.7%	27.9%	60.5%	2.3%	3.51
Parent's Wishes	2.3%	11.6%	39.5%	37.2%	9.3%	3.40
Comfort with Student Body	9.3%	9.3%	30.2%	39.5%	11.6%	3.35
Financial Aid	16.3%	11.6%	18.6%	32.6%	20.9%	3.30
Comfort with Other Players	32.6%	2.3%	9.3%	37.2%	18.6%	3.07
Sports Program's Reputation	32.6%	4.7%	16.3%	32.6%	14.0%	2.91
Athletic Conference Reputation	27.9%	7.0%	25.6%	34.9%	4.7%	2.81
Opportunity to Win Championships	30.2%	9.3%	23.3%	25.6%	11.6%	2.79
Comfort with Sport Coaches	34.9%	9.3%	16.3%	23.3%	16.3%	2.77
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	34.9%	4.7%	20.9%	34.9%	4.7%	2.70
Chance to Travel with Team	25.6%	18.6%	25.6%	27.9%	2.3%	2.63
College Guides and Publications	18.6%	25.6%	34.9%	20.9%	.0%	2.58
Official Campus Visit	41.9%	9.3%	11.6%	25.6%	11.6%	2.56
College Head Coach	46.5%	9.3%	11.6%	18.6%	14.0%	2.44
Athletic Schedule Strength	39.5%	7.0%	27.9%	23.3%	2.3%	2.42
Friend's Recommendation	37.2%	20.9%	25.6%	14.0%	2.3%	2.23
School Alumni	37.2%	23.3%	20.9%	18.6%	.0%	2.21
Team's Won/Loss Record	44.2%	14.0%	25.6%	16.3%	.0%	2.14
High School Guidance Recommendation	34.9%	32.6%	27.9%	4.7%	.0%	2.02
High School Coach's Recommendation	48.8%	18.6%	16.3%	14.0%	2.3%	2.02
Potential to Play Professionally	58.1%	11.6%	23.3%	7.0%	.0%	1.79
Television Exposure	76.7%	11.6%	9.3%	2.3%	.0%	1.37

Table A.22: Total Percentages for Women's Soccer

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	5.6%	44.4%	50.0%	4.44
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	22.2%	27.8%	50.0%	4.28
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	5.6%	16.7%	22.2%	55.6%	4.28
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	16.7%	38.9%	44.4%	4.28
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	11.1%	55.6%	33.3%	4.22
College Head Coach	.0%	5.6%	16.7%	27.8%	50.0%	4.22
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	33.3%	16.7%	50.0%	4.17
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	11.1%	66.7%	22.2%	4.11
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	27.8%	33.3%	38.9%	4.11
Official Campus Visit	.0%	.0%	27.8%	44.4%	27.8%	4.00
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	5.6%	22.2%	44.4%	27.8%	3.94
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	5.6%	27.8%	44.4%	22.2%	3.83
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	33.3%	55.6%	11.1%	3.78
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	.0%	44.4%	33.3%	22.2%	3.78
School Location	.0%	5.6%	27.8%	50.0%	16.7%	3.78
Parent's Wishes	.0%	11.1%	16.7%	55.6%	16.7%	3.78
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	50.0%	38.9%	11.1%	3.61
School Size	.0%	5.6%	27.8%	66.7%	.0%	3.61
Comfort with Student Body	5.6%	.0%	33.3%	55.6%	5.6%	3.56
Potential to Play Professionally	.0%	11.1%	50.0%	16.7%	22.2%	3.50
Financial Aid	11.1%	5.6%	22.2%	50.0%	11.1%	3.44
Television Exposure	.0%	16.7%	55.6%	22.2%	5.6%	3.17
High School Coach's Recommendation	22.2%	5.6%	55.6%	5.6%	11.1%	2.78
College Guides and Publications	11.1%	38.9%	33.3%	11.1%	5.6%	2.61
Friend's Recommendation	33.3%	22.2%	38.9%	5.6%	.0%	2.17
School Alumni	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	.0%	2.17
High School Guidance Recommendation	38.9%	22.2%	33.3%	5.6%	.0%	2.06

Table A.23: Total Percentages for Women's Softball

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	5.3%	31.6%	63.2%	4.58
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	10.5%	47.4%	42.1%	4.32
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	15.8%	36.8%	47.4%	4.32
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	5.3%	10.5%	36.8%	47.4%	4.26
Athletic Facilities	.0%	10.5%	10.5%	26.3%	52.6%	4.21
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	10.5%	57.9%	31.6%	4.21
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	.0%	21.1%	47.4%	31.6%	4.11
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	21.1%	47.4%	31.6%	4.11
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	21.1%	52.6%	26.3%	4.05
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	15.8%	63.2%	21.1%	4.05
Financial Aid	5.3%	10.5%	10.5%	26.3%	47.4%	4.00
Official Campus Visit	.0%	5.3%	26.3%	36.8%	31.6%	3.95
School Location	.0%	10.5%	10.5%	57.9%	21.1%	3.89
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	10.5%	21.1%	36.8%	31.6%	3.89
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	5.3%	31.6%	31.6%	31.6%	3.89
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	26.3%	68.4%	5.3%	3.79
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	10.5%	26.3%	52.6%	10.5%	3.63
Parent's Wishes	.0%	15.8%	21.1%	63.2%	.0%	3.47
Comfort with Student Body	5.3%	15.8%	26.3%	47.4%	5.3%	3.32
School Size	.0%	10.5%	47.4%	42.1%	.0%	3.32
Television Exposure	.0%	10.5%	68.4%	15.8%	5.3%	3.16
High School Coach's Recommendation	.0%	31.6%	42.1%	26.3%	.0%	2.95
Potential to Play Professionally	15.8%	31.6%	26.3%	15.8%	10.5%	2.74
College Guides and Publications	5.3%	47.4%	42.1%	5.3%	.0%	2.47
Friend's Recommendation	10.5%	47.4%	36.8%	.0%	5.3%	2.42
School Alumni	26.3%	31.6%	31.6%	10.5%	.0%	2.26
High School Guidance Recommendation	15.8%	52.6%	31.6%	.0%	.0%	2.16

Table A.24: Total Percentages for Women's Swimming and Diving

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	20.0%	25.0%	55.0%	4.35
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	20.0%	35.0%	45.0%	4.25
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	25.0%	30.0%	45.0%	4.20
Chance to Travel with Team	5.0%	.0%	25.0%	25.0%	45.0%	4.05
School Location	.0%	10.0%	15.0%	40.0%	35.0%	4.00
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	25.0%	50.0%	25.0%	4.00
Athletic Conference Reputation	5.0%	.0%	30.0%	35.0%	30.0%	3.85
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	10.0%	5.0%	10.0%	40.0%	35.0%	3.85
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	35.0%	55.0%	10.0%	3.75
Athletic Schedule Strength	10.0%	5.0%	10.0%	50.0%	25.0%	3.75
Overall School Reputation	.0%	10.0%	25.0%	50.0%	15.0%	3.70
Official Campus Visit	.0%	25.0%	15.0%	25.0%	35.0%	3.70
Opportunity to Win Championships	10.0%	.0%	25.0%	45.0%	20.0%	3.65
School Size	.0%	5.0%	30.0%	60.0%	5.0%	3.65
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	15.0%	20.0%	60.0%	5.0%	3.55
Specific Academic Programs	5.0%	10.0%	30.0%	40.0%	15.0%	3.50
Comfort with Student Body	5.0%	.0%	40.0%	50.0%	5.0%	3.50
Parent's Wishes	15.0%	.0%	25.0%	50.0%	10.0%	3.40
Team's Won/Loss Record	15.0%	.0%	35.0%	40.0%	10.0%	3.30
Financial Aid	15.0%	15.0%	20.0%	45.0%	5.0%	3.10
High School Coach's Recommendation	40.0%	20.0%	15.0%	25.0%	.0%	2.25
College Guides and Publications	25.0%	45.0%	20.0%	10.0%	.0%	2.15
Friend's Recommendation	45.0%	20.0%	15.0%	20.0%	.0%	2.10
School Alumni	45.0%	20.0%	20.0%	15.0%	.0%	2.05
High School Guidance Recommendation	45.0%	30.0%	15.0%	10.0%	.0%	1.90
Potential to Play Professionally	55.0%	25.0%	15.0%	.0%	5.0%	1.75
Television Exposure	65.0%	25.0%	10.0%	.0%	.0%	1.45

Table A.25: Total Percentages for Women's Tennis

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Athletic Facilities	11.1%	.0%	11.1%	.0%	77.8%	4.33
Sports Program's Reputation	11.1%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	66.7%	4.33
Opportunity to Win Championships	11.1%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	66.7%	4.33
Athletic Conference Reputation	11.1%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	66.7%	4.33
Athletic Schedule Strength	11.1%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	66.7%	4.33
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	11.1%	.0%	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	4.00
Chance to Travel with Team	11.1%	.0%	11.1%	33.3%	44.4%	4.00
Team's Won/Loss Record	11.1%	.0%	.0%	55.6%	33.3%	4.00
Comfort with Sport Coaches	11.1%	.0%	22.2%	33.3%	33.3%	3.78
Comfort with Other Players	22.2%	.0%	.0%	33.3%	44.4%	3.78
School Location	.0%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	22.2%	3.67
College Head Coach	11.1%	.0%	33.3%	22.2%	33.3%	3.67
Overall School Reputation	.0%	11.1%	22.2%	66.7%	.0%	3.56
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	.0%	44.4%	55.6%	.0%	3.56
Financial Aid	11.1%	22.2%	11.1%	11.1%	44.4%	3.56
Potential to Play Professionally	11.1%	.0%	44.4%	22.2%	22.2%	3.44
Official Campus Visit	22.2%	.0%	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	3.33
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	88.9%	11.1%	.0%	3.11
Comfort with Student Body	22.2%	11.1%	22.2%	44.4%	.0%	2.89
School Size	22.2%	11.1%	33.3%	33.3%	.0%	2.78
Television Exposure	22.2%	11.1%	55.6%	.0%	11.1%	2.67
Parent's Wishes	11.1%	22.2%	66.7%	.0%	.0%	2.56
College Guides and Publications	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	22.2%	.0%	2.33
High School Coach's Recommendation	44.4%	22.2%	33.3%	.0%	.0%	1.89
Friend's Recommendation	55.6%	11.1%	33.3%	.0%	.0%	1.78
High School Guidance Recommendation	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	.0%	.0%	1.56
School Alumni	66.7%	11.1%	22.2%	.0%	.0%	1.56

Table A.26: Total Percentages for Women's Track and Field

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	2.9%	2.9%	5.7%	34.3%	54.3%	4.34
Chance to Travel with Team	2.9%	.0%	14.3%	37.1%	45.7%	4.23
Comfort with Sport Coaches	2.9%	2.9%	22.9%	14.3%	57.1%	4.20
Athletic Conference Reputation	.0%	.0%	22.9%	45.7%	31.4%	4.09
Athletic Facilities	.0%	8.6%	17.1%	37.1%	37.1%	4.03
College Head Coach	5.7%	.0%	20.0%	34.3%	40.0%	4.03
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	8.6%	20.0%	37.1%	34.3%	3.97
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	2.9%	28.6%	40.0%	28.6%	3.94
School Location	.0%	.0%	34.3%	40.0%	25.7%	3.91
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	5.7%	22.9%	45.7%	25.7%	3.91
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	5.7%	20.0%	54.3%	20.0%	3.89
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	28.6%	60.0%	11.4%	3.83
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	.0%	31.4%	54.3%	14.3%	3.83
Financial Aid	5.7%	8.6%	17.1%	34.3%	34.3%	3.83
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	11.4%	25.7%	45.7%	17.1%	3.69
Official Campus Visit	8.6%	.0%	34.3%	28.6%	28.6%	3.69
Comfort with Student Body	2.9%	5.7%	31.4%	42.9%	17.1%	3.66
School Size	2.9%	2.9%	42.9%	48.6%	2.9%	3.46
Potential to Play Professionally	8.6%	11.4%	37.1%	17.1%	25.7%	3.40
Parent's Wishes	11.4%	5.7%	34.3%	37.1%	11.4%	3.31
Team's Won/Loss Record	14.3%	.0%	42.9%	31.4%	11.4%	3.26
High School Coach's Recommendation	31.4%	8.6%	25.7%	25.7%	8.6%	2.71
Television Exposure	25.7%	22.9%	31.4%	17.1%	2.9%	2.49
College Guides and Publications	17.1%	34.3%	34.3%	14.3%	.0%	2.46
Friend's Recommendation	45.7%	20.0%	25.7%	8.6%	.0%	1.97
School Alumni	51.4%	17.1%	22.9%	5.7%	2.9%	1.91
High School Guidance Recommendation	45.7%	25.7%	25.7%	2.9%	.0%	1.86

Table A.27: Total Percentages for Women's Volleyball

	not considered	not at all important	not very important	important	very important	Mean
Comfort with Other Players	.0%	.0%	.0%	38.5%	61.5%	4.62
Athletic Facilities	.0%	.0%	7.7%	30.8%	61.5%	4.54
Sports Program's Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	46.2%	53.8%	4.54
Opportunity to Win Championships	.0%	.0%	.0%	46.2%	53.8%	4.54
Parent's Wishes	.0%	.0%	.0%	53.8%	46.2%	4.46
Chance to Travel with Team	.0%	.0%	.0%	53.8%	46.2%	4.46
Team's Won/Loss Record	.0%	.0%	.0%	53.8%	46.2%	4.46
Comfort with Sport Coaches	.0%	.0%	7.7%	46.2%	46.2%	4.38
Opportunity to Play or Start in First Year	.0%	.0%	15.4%	30.8%	53.8%	4.38
College Head Coach	.0%	.0%	7.7%	46.2%	46.2%	4.38
Overall School Reputation	.0%	.0%	.0%	76.9%	23.1%	4.23
Athletic Conference Reputation	7.7%	.0%	.0%	53.8%	38.5%	4.15
School Location	.0%	7.7%	15.4%	38.5%	38.5%	4.08
Athletic Schedule Strength	.0%	.0%	15.4%	61.5%	23.1%	4.08
School Size	.0%	.0%	15.4%	61.5%	23.1%	4.08
Official Campus Visit	15.4%	.0%	7.7%	23.1%	53.8%	4.00
Financial Aid	7.7%	.0%	23.1%	30.8%	38.5%	3.92
School's Academic Reputation	.0%	7.7%	23.1%	46.2%	23.1%	3.85
Specific Academic Programs	.0%	.0%	38.5%	46.2%	15.4%	3.77
Comfort with Student Body	15.4%	.0%	7.7%	69.2%	7.7%	3.54
High School Coach's Recommendation	7.7%	7.7%	46.2%	23.1%	15.4%	3.31
Television Exposure	15.4%	7.7%	38.5%	30.8%	7.7%	3.08
Potential to Play Professionally	23.1%	15.4%	15.4%	30.8%	15.4%	3.00
Friend's Recommendation	23.1%	.0%	61.5%	15.4%	.0%	2.69
College Guides and Publications	7.7%	38.5%	38.5%	15.4%	.0%	2.62
High School Guidance Recommendation	30.8%	7.7%	46.2%	15.4%	.0%	2.46
School Alumni	53.8%	.0%	30.8%	15.4%	.0%	2.08

Table A.28: Sports Top Five By Mean

	Men's Sports Mean							Women's Sports Mean								
	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Basketball	Golf	Rowing	Soccer	Softball	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Volleyball
Overall School Reputation									3.70							
School's Academic Reputation									3.77							
School Location									4.02			4.00				
Specific Academic Programs									4.00							
Parent's Wishes																4.46
Financial Aid								4.50								
Athletic Facilities	4.32		4.40	4.45			4.13	4.83	3.53	4.22	4.21		4.33	4.03	4.54	
Comfort with Sport Coaches		4.47		4.39	4.33	4.08	4.82				4.26	4.20		4.20		
Comfort with Other Players		4.41		4.65	4.33		4.91	4.50		4.44	4.32	4.25		4.34	4.62	
Sports Program's Reputation	4.26		4.51	4.36	4.48	4.67	4.26	4.67		4.28	4.21	4.00	4.33		4.54	
Opportunity to Win Championships	4.39		4.81	4.45		4.67	4.25	4.73	4.50		4.28	4.58		4.33		4.54
Athletic Conference Reputation	4.48	4.41	4.59	4.45	4.30	4.33	4.15	4.73			4.28	4.32		4.33	4.09	
Athletic Schedule Strength						4.33								4.33		
Potential to Play Professionally	4.35		4.45													
College Head Coach				4.48	4.33		4.82	4.67		4.22		4.35		4.03		
Chance to Travel with Team		4.47						4.50				4.05		4.23	4.46	
Team's Won/Loss Record		4.47				4.33	4.73									4.46
Television Exposure		4.53	4.41													

Table A.29: Sport Bottom Five By Mean

	Men's Sports Mean							Women's Sports Mean								
	Baseball	Basketball	Football	Golf	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Basketball	Golf	Rowing	Soccer	Softball	Swimming and Diving	Tennis	Track and Field	Volleyball
School Size								3.00	2.83							
Overall School Reputation		3.94														
School's Academic Reputation						3.17										
Specific Academic Programs						2.83										
College Guides and Publications	2.32	3.59	2.68	2.64	2.04	3.33	2.96	2.91			2.61	2.47		2.33	2.46	2.62
High School Guidance Recommendation	1.87	3.88	1.94	2.00	1.74		2.28	2.27	2.33	2.02	2.06	2.16	1.90	1.56	1.86	2.46
Friend's Recommendation	2.55	3.88	2.38	2.73		3.33	2.49	2.45			2.17	2.42	2.10	1.78	1.97	2.69
School Alumni	2.55	3.65	2.31	2.91	2.48	3.00	2.40	2.27	1.83		2.17	2.26	2.05	1.56	1.91	2.08
Financial Aid						3.00										
High School Coach's Recommendation	2.84		3.01	2.00					2.00	2.02	2.78			1.89		
Potential to Play Professionally					2.04					1.79		2.74	1.75			3.00
Team's Won/Loss Record										2.14						
Television Exposure					2.00	3.33	3.04		2.50	1.37			1.45		2.49	

VITA

John (Pat) Teeples is a career educator originally from Celina, Tennessee. He started his college career at the University of the South where he played collegiate football. He transferred to Middle Tennessee State University where he received his B.S. degree in English, with minors in Education and Finance. Dr. Teeples then attended Tennessee Tech University where he completed an M.S. degree in Curriculum and Instruction and an Ed.S. degree in College Student Personnel. He received his Ed.D. in Educational Administration from the University of Tennessee in 2005.

Dr. Teeples has had varied experiences in both secondary education and higher education. He has taught English and coached football and track at the secondary level. Dr. Teeples has worked with student affairs, Greek affairs, campus activities, programming, and admissions in higher education. He has also taught classes at the higher education level, along with his work with college student athletes.

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